

Major keeps election options open

Ribble rout will force Heseltine's hand on poll tax

By RICHARD FORD AND DOUGLAS BROOM

PLANS for a new property tax to replace the community charge are expected to be announced before Easter, as the government comes under increasing pressure from its backbenchers and councillors to act swiftly to prevent further electoral humiliation at the local polls in May.

John Major insisted yesterday that the Tories' heavy defeat in the by-election at Ribbles Valley, one of their safest seats, would not "bounce" him into making a hasty decision on the future of the poll tax. But town hall leaders made clear that Michael Heseltine's review team must spell out its alternative in time to save them from defeat in the biggest local election for four years.

More than ten thousand seats on district councils, mostly Conservative-controlled, are up for election, along with another 827 metropolitan seats, dominated by Labour. A swing on the scale of the Ribbles Valley result would be disastrous for the Conser-

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vatives if repeated on May 2, and would almost certainly scupper any hopes of a June general election.

Mr Major has called ministers to a meeting next week as the government attempts to resolve a dispute within Whitehall over alternatives to the poll tax. Admitting that the tax was "clearly unpopular" in the by-election, Mr Major said he was clear which way the fundamental review being undertaken by Mr Heseltine would go.

Mr Heseltine has, however, been told by his advisers that replacing the community charge with a property tax could be as politically damaging as leaving it in place. A return to the rates could cost the average household £866. The new rates would be much higher than they were in their previous incarnation because of the cuts in government grants to local authorities and because the introduction of the uniform business rate means councils can no longer cushion the burden on individuals by increasing that on commercial concerns.

There is a growing right-wing lobby in favour of retaining the "poll tax" and many Conservatives are clinging to the principle that everyone should pay something towards local services.

While the cabinet and the party are divided on how to extricate themselves from the dilemma, an announcement on an alternative is expected before the Commons Easter recess begins on March 28. Mr Heseltine indicated yesterday that that announcement would cover only part of the conclusions of his review, and this has alarmed Conservative councillors who are pressing him to come up with full details. Chris Patten, the party chairman, promised the government would come up with something so that candidates

in the May elections would have "something positive to say" on the doorsteps.

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, said last night that the review of the community charge must produce an answer that was radical. "The idea that we can simply tinker with the community charge at around its present levels now clearly lacks conviction."

Mr Hurd dismissed the by-election result, in which the Liberal Democrats overturned a Tory majority of nearly 20,000 to win by 4,601, as a "flash in the pan", and Mr Major said it was simply a protest vote. "On this occasion the Liberals were the suitable dustbin for the protest vote and they won."

The defeat makes a June general election less likely, but Mr Major is expected to make his final decision on whether to go to the country in the summer on the evidence of the local polls in May. He insisted yesterday that the by-election would not affect his thinking. "It has made no difference whatsoever either way to the date of the general election," he said in Scotland, "not least because I have not determined what the date might be."

Paddy Ashdown, the Liberal Democrat leader, hailed the 25 per cent swing that made Mike Carr party's 21st MP. He said the government would pay a very heavy price if it did not listen to the people who wanted rid of the poll tax. The result was even better than the Liberal Democrats' victory in Eastbourne last October when they "overturned a 17,000 Conservative majority."

Labour, who had talked of being in second place, saw its vote fall to 4,356. John Cunningham, the party's campaign coordinator, said the party had been the victim of a classic by-election squeeze.

Dr Cunningham said the government was in absolute disarray on the poll tax. "A lot of Tories are still sticking to the principle of everyone having to pay regardless of whether they can afford to or whether they have any money."



Grief and honour: the Duke of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Fusiliers, saluting the war dead yesterday as families weep at Brize Norton

Day of sorrow as war dead return

By JOE JOSEPH

THE grey clouds parted a few minutes before noon yesterday and let the sun streak the Oxfordshire countryside just as an RAF Hercules aircraft, carrying the coffins of 17 British soldiers killed in action in the Gulf, banked onto the military air strip at Brize Norton.

The faces of the waiting families remained grey. Some cried quietly. One mother waved a fist and yelled her son's name as the plane's roaring engines cut out.

The first coffin off the plane belonged to Corporal David Denbury of the Royal Corps of Engineers, the youngest to be killed in the Gulf. The next was that of the youngest of the three privates from the Queen's Own Highlanders and the six Fusiliers who were killed by friendly fire, one of the euphemisms created to camouflage the awful blunders of war. The nine men, the oldest just aged 21, died when a US plane attacked their armoured personnel carrier in the thick of fighting.

The coffins, draped in a Union Jack and crowned by the soldiers' regimental berets and caps, were carried by pallbearers picked from their regiments and along a guard of honour drawn from the army, air force and navy.

The line of coffins was accompanied on its journey from the Hercules to the base by the St George's Band of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, chosen because it was the regiment that suffered the biggest toll among yesterday's returnees. The band's music sheet of slow laments included Elgar's *Nimrod* and Beethoven's *Funeral March*.

At 12.40pm, after the last of the waiting hearse had poured away to a government undertaker in Banbury for the Oxfordshire coroner to ink and stamp the military paperwork, the 100 or so relatives turned their back on the windy airfield tarmac and returned to the warmth of the terminal building, many of them huddled in each other's arms to lessen the grief and the cold.

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Rafsanjani call, page 8

Thousands stranded as holiday firm collapses

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S travel industry was in turmoil last night after the collapse of the International Leisure Group left Air Europe's scheduled passengers stranded and tens of thousands of holidays in jeopardy.

Administrators appointed by the High Court to unravel the mess caused by the failure - with liabilities of £480 million - of the country's second biggest travel organisation now have only weeks to find a buyer prepared to take over the Gatwick-based airline and several tour operations headed by Intasun. If they fail, more than 7,000 employees of the companies which, until the start of the Gulf war, had seemed poised to become the major pan-European travel group, could lose their jobs and Gatwick airport lose its biggest customer.

The decision to apply for the appointment of an administrator was taken in the early hours of yesterday morning after a ten-hour board meeting of Hudson Place Investments, ILG's parent company, had tried to put together a last-minute rescue package.

Lloyds Bank was prepared to provide some of the additional cash needed to keep the airline flying but wanted other investors to match their offer. The other investors were unable to do so. As a result, creditors in the early hours said they would seize some of Air Europe's assets.

Harry Goodman, ILG's chairman who over the past

ten years had built the group into one of the dominant forces in the giant British travel industry, was not at the meeting. He is a London hospital with diabetes and was kept informed by telephone of the meeting's progress.

Last night Dan Air, a rival airline which itself faced bankruptcy four months ago, immediately applied to take over Air Europe's scheduled route licences and recalled many staff to cope with the expected increased demand.

Other tour operators, backed by a £60 million bond lodged with the Association of British Travel Agents and a £25 million Air Travel Reserve Fund, said they would accept bookings which had been made with Intasun and other tour companies.

Tim Hayward, of KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock who was appointed administrator by the High Court, said last night: "The tour business appears to have been profitable and the airline has a modern fleet and a good reputation in the industry. Quite clearly at the present time the opportunities for the holiday business are not as rosy as they were a few years ago, but we will be seeking to sell these businesses as a going concern."

But there was not much time, he said. "We now need to take advantage of a relatively limited window of opportunity to sell," he said. "Air Europe is now suspended and while we hope we will have it flying again in very

short order, it is a wasting asset and you can't stop flying for months and then start again."

Discussions are in progress with the Civil Aviation Authority about the length of time which may be granted to the administrators to sell the companies before they lose their licences and effectively become valueless. "Most of the aircraft are leased and it is therefore routes, slots and the organisation itself which we will be looking to sell," Mr Hayward said. "There is certainly no pot of gold in respect of the equity interest in the aircraft that we can tap."

ILG was badly affected both by the recession and the Gulf war, with the war alone resulting in up to £70 million in revenues disappearing as holiday-makers postponed their bookings and businessmen stopped flying to meetings. Mr Goodman had built up his travel empire on the basis that both would be complementary, with charter airline passengers providing an income for his scheduled airline to expand.

Passengers wait, page 4
Banks pull plug, page 23

Farewell to unlamented Club 18-30

By MEGAN TRESIDDER

YOU can almost hear the sighs of relief across Europe. The financial difficulties of the ILG group may be causing misery for passengers stranded at Gatwick airport by their delayed Air Europe flights, but elsewhere prayers are being sent up in thanks for what may prove to be the end of the Club 18-30 holiday.

Memories of one such holiday still haunt me. I was sent undercover a few years ago to San Antonio in Ibiza, the biggest of the company's 50 worldwide resorts. I went to investigate for myself the mix of sun, sea, sex and *sangria*, offered by the world's biggest youth holiday company. Club 18-30 caters for 100,000 young Britons a year. It was an unforgettable experience.

My hotel room looked out on to a balcony on which the previous occupant had thrown up. We were told the rules on our first night. The rules were largely fashioned to cope with the problems caused by the malfunctions of young bodies exposed to large quantities of drink and sun. There was a system of fines: 1,000 pesetas for throwing up in the coach, 2,000 pesetas for doing it over

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Careless words cost lives?

Conor Gearty argues that confused definitions of terror and terrorism make the fight against subversion in Northern Ireland more difficult

SATURDAY REVIEW

Puffing Palin, Poles apart



Michael Palin comes in from a jog to talk of a walk (from Pole to Pole) and other modest adventures in the joke-free zone

SATURDAY REVIEW

A little night music

George Hill finds Westminster Abbey after hours gently lit and filled with choral harmonies

PAGE 14

A big week for Dessie

A close-up on the remarkable Desert Orchid ahead of next week's Gold Cup

PAGE 36

Enchanted coastline

Leslie Thomas watches high seas on jagged rocks in a Cornwall that keeps its secrets, and its charms, in and out of season

SATURDAY REVIEW

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Shevardnadze's Moscow fears

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

EDUARD Shevardnadze, the former Soviet foreign minister, has given a warning of a "shadow power" in Moscow operating beyond President Gorbachev's control and responsible for increasing repression in the Soviet Union.

In an emotional interview with the ABC television network on Thursday night, one of the few he has given since his abrupt resignation last December, Mr Shevardnadze insisted Mr Gorbachev "could never be a dictator" and had not been responsible for repression in the Baltic region in January or for moves such as putting military and KGB patrols back on the streets of Soviet cities to keep order and curbing press freedoms.

"The president doesn't al-

ways make all the decisions," he said. "That means there is some kind of shadow power here in the Soviet Union, a shadow authority, and we must now begin to analyse that, to investigate it."

He continued: "Sometimes decisions are made without any kind of authority from the president. It's bad, very bad." Mr Shevardnadze's comments are the most authoritative confirmation yet of what the Bush administration has long suspected, that Mr Gorbachev no longer has complete control over the Soviet military and Communist hardliners who are beginning to operate independently. When criticising the turn of events in the Soviet Union,

Continued on page 22, col 1

A radical producer's lot is not a happy one

By CRAIG SEITON

THE D'Oyly Carte Opera Company, standard-bearer of original Gilbert and Sullivan for more than a century, was yesterday unrepentant after opening at its new home with a gala performance of *The Gondoliers* that so offended some aficionados that they greeted the final curtain call with loud booing.

The occasion, to celebrate the company's move from London's Savoy to the Alexandra Theatre in Birmingham, was attended by a distinguished gathering including Tim Renton, the arts minister. But the company committed what amounted to heresy among purists by departing from the traditional presentation.

The enthusiasts, described as a vocal minority, were apparently upset that a company so bound by its links

with Gilbert and Sullivan could have sores in *The Gondoliers* that included the appearance of a corpi in a car and a fox with an uncanny resemblance to Basil Brush. At one stage the players sat and watched television, while the Venetian setting was described by one reviewer as a "yellow corrugated stage".

Those present insisted that the applause was far louder than the booing, but such obvious displeasure was almost unheard of in the long history of the D'Oyly Carte productions of William Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. The company presented their work exclusively in its original form for more than a century until it went out of business in 1962 after the Arts Council refused it a subsidy. It was described in a council report as "being like a splendid old actress well

past her prime, waddling away into the distance to a well-deserved and peaceful death".

The company was reformed in 1988 with sponsorship from British Midland Airways and a large bequest from the estate of the late Dame Bridget D'Oyly Carte, grand-daughter of the impresario. It signalled that the old days and the former stylised productions at the Savoy, during which audiences had declined, were over. It also said that it would no longer perform Gilbert and Sullivan exclusively as it sought younger audiences at more modern performances.

Yesterday Ray Brown, the company's general manager, said of the Birmingham performance: "It made everybody think. A small minority felt it should have been a totally

traditional performance and it was not." He agreed the performance puzzled some people, but added: "We are a new company and we have to look forward." Of those who booed, he said: "I am reliably informed they were disgruntled people who have previously had some connection with the company."

Undoubtedly, one problem facing the new company is the expectation among richard Gilbert and Sullivan fans that its productions will include the punny diction, hammy acting and funny walks that reigned for decades (Our Arts Editor writes). In recent years, other companies have reinvented G&S, using rock singers, television comedians and slick Broadway productions.

Little sparkle, page 19

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Nick Wilson, leader of the Tory group on the association, said: "The fact that the poll tax is a major issue is clear following Thursday night's debate. We need a clear policy to put to the electorate."

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**QUEEN
ELIZABETH 2**

A maverick for whom the bubble could only get bigger

By HARVEY ELLIOTT
AIR CORRESPONDENT

TO MANY of his less flamboyant rivals in the travel industry, Harry Goodman was the maverick whose approach to business contained the elements of disaster. To friends and confidants, however, he was a big-hearted and dynamic leader, never letting bureaucracy stifle his instinct for a good deal.

His goal was to smash the European state-owned giants' monopoly of intra-European air services by setting up a network of airlines registered throughout the Continent. They would offer cheaper fares and a high level of service that would gain popular support until they could capitalise on the liberalisation of air services in Europe promised from the end of next year.

In the meantime, he bought the

latest equipment and used it intensively. He believed that by flying scheduled operations during the day and charter flights at night, the aircraft, with their high fuel efficiency, would easily make a profit. "Some critics say we have expanded too fast," Mr Goodman said two years ago as he ordered dozens more aircraft. "I have to agree that every carrier which has pitched for rapid growth has come a cropper and gone bust."

However, he argued that those others had "turned their backs on their traditional bedrock of passenger support - charters". He was determined that every European joint venture involved partners with access to many leisure clients, as his airline did through its sister company, Intasun.

In the end, this strategy led to Air Europe's collapse. When Iraq invaded Kuwait, holiday bookings

stopped overnight. International Leisure Group (ILG) in the seven months since has lost 400,000 bookings worth an estimated £24 million in deposits. With scheduled sales also down by half, the cash flow dried up, while loan payments mounted.

"We have been pulled down by the general mess," Rod Lynch, Air Europe's managing director, said yesterday. "We needed recapitalisation and we came to grief because of a short-term problem. Once that has been resolved, few would be prepared to gamble against Harry Goodman making some sort of a comeback."

Harry Goodman, aged 51, was raised in east London and left school at 15 with no O-levels but a love of the travel industry. He was rejected by Thomas Cook, but by the age of 22 had learnt enough from working on the fringes of the

industry to become his own master. With capital of £500, he and friends bought a small travel agency, Sidcup Travel, in Kent. He changed the name to Sunair and branched out as a tour operator. By 1971, he sold his interests in the company for £70,000 and took a two-year sabbatical in Spain and Greece where he learnt what British tourists expected from their package holidays. On his return, he bought Intasun for £25,000, sold its travel agency element and developed the package tour side.

Only one year later, the fledgling company heard rumours of the imminent collapse of Clarkson's, and Goodman hired a fleet of private jets and had them in the air with negotiating teams on board within 40 minutes of the announcement of Clarkson's collapse. Mediterranean holidays

afraid of being left with empty beds, sold them to Intasun at a big discount. Intasun picked up 50,000 holidays and made £30,000 profit. In 1982, Goodman was with Sir Freddie Laker's on the night his company collapsed. Although Goodman offered his old friend sympathy and advice, his main interest was in picking up Laker clients. That summer, Intasun sold more than 500,000 holidays for the first time.

Goodman worked ceaselessly, losing two marriages as a result. He became a multi-millionaire, and gave unstintingly to charity, raising more than £1.5 million for underprivileged children.

His business continued to expand as tour operators such as Club 18-30, Global, Lancaster and Ski-Scene were added to the group. It was the big numbers of passengers those tour operators

could guarantee that convinced him to expand Air Europe. The airline was boosted when BCal was sold to British Airways allowing Air Europe to apply for, and get, many of BCal's licences into Europe and it quickly became the biggest force in scheduled and passenger services at Gatwick.

In building up those services, Goodman invested £20 million between 1987 and 1989, and was so full of confidence that in 1987 he and his 25 directors and senior managers paid £156 million to regain control of the company, which he had earlier floated on the Stock Exchange.

In 1989, he announced plans to spend more than £1.65 billion on new jets. The bubble could, it was said, only get larger as demand for aircraft increased sending the value of his purchases soaring even before they were built. If

trouble struck, he could always sell them and make a handsome profit. The Gulf war, however, hit travel, and second-hand aircraft values fell. ILG had to ask Lloyds Bank, its principal backer, for help to stay afloat. Lloyds agreed, provided more cash was raised by other investors, and Goodman stepped down as chief executive, although remaining chairman.

Goodman had been feeling ill and was then involved in a car crash, which cracked his ribs. A check-up indicated chronic diabetes and he was taken to hospital. For much of the past few days, while his empire was disintegrating, Goodman was confined to a hospital bed, still trying to piece together a rescue package so that his company could have taken advantage of the travel boom that the industry is convinced is just around the corner.

Passengers have to sit and wait or pay again

By PETER VICTOR

HUNDREDS of travellers were left angry and frustrated yesterday by the realisation that they had almost no hope of flying to their holiday destinations.

At the Intasun travel desk at Gatwick, passengers left stranded by the collapse of Air Europe sat or lay on the ground waiting for news while the phone lines enjoyed constant attention. At Birmingham airport, some tourists had boarded their flight only to be told that it would not be allowed to take off.

All would-be passengers at Gatwick were handed letters from the airline saying that services had been suspended and that an application had been made to the High Court for the appointment of an

administrator. Regardless of the outcome, however, no one would be flying unless they could get a standby ticket from another airline and could afford to pay for it.

Suzanne Holcombe, a 19-year-old student from Barnstaple, Devon, said: "We arrived at five o'clock and the only thing we have been told is that Air Europe has ceased trading. I can't believe the way we have been treated - it's disgusting."

Elaine Mitchell, aged 54, had been due to visit her daughter in Italy for Mothers' Day. She arrived at 8.30am to find that her 10am flight to Rome had been cancelled. "I feel sick," she said. "It's really bad. We arrived here and there was nothing, no-one to tell us what to do or what was going on."

One man sat on his luggage, whimsically strumming "Ticket to Ride" on his guitar. Few passengers were so sanguine. Julia Mann, aged 22, of Bromley, southeast London, who had booked a week's holiday in The Gambia, said: "We have just been told to hang around the airport and maybe the other airlines will get a flight together for us."

Sami Jones, 22, from Poole, Dorset, had booked a weekend trip to Rome for herself and her mother, Anita. Miss Jones said: "We came to check in and they said: 'You are not going anywhere.' Later, she broke down and wept with disappointment."

At Birmingham airport, more than 200 passengers were left without flights. Some tourists bound for Malaga had boarded one flight and were waiting for the aircraft to take off when it was grounded by an order from the control tower. In Majorca, 60 to 90 Britons were stranded.

Malcolm Deller, Air Europe's airport manager at Gatwick, said that he had been told of the collapse at 4.45am. "Staff were devastated," he said. "The company issued a statement asking us to deal with the situation as professionally as we can."

The collapse of Air Europe could not have come at a worse time for Gatwick airport. Malcolm Rifkind, the transport secretary, announced this week that Heathrow would be thrown open to any airline that wanted to fly from there - a move that immediately led to a rush of applications from airlines based at Gatwick, raising fears that it could become little more than a "bucket and spade" charter base.

British Airways yesterday announced further cuts in its Gatwick operation by withdrawing services to Stockholm, Barcelona, Karachi, and Bangkok, and cutting its services to Bermuda. BA made it clear that it has no intention of picking up any Air Europe services that it was forced to hand over after its takeover of British Caledonian. The government then assumed that it was creating competition by licensing Air Europe to fly alongside BA.

Further reductions are expected in services from Gatwick and the future of Stansted, which next week will have its new terminal opened by the Queen, is looking increasingly uncertain.



Happier days: Goodman in 1982 when Intasun sold over 500,000 holidays for the first time. "Some critics say we have expanded too fast," he said.

End sealed for sun, sand and chips industry

By RAY CLANCY

THE collapse of Harry Goodman's ILG sounds a death knell for the package holiday industry. Goodman, with his "pile it high, sell it cheap" philosophy, helped to create a monster.

The larger lout, the typhoid on the beaches scare, the unfinished-hotel fraud are the direct product of an unlovely industry that has for decades sold the idea of "sunny Spain" or "gorgeous Greece" without the inconvenience of meeting foreigners. Watneys Red Barrel, fish and chips and the worst British prejudices have been exported to the Costa uncleaned by the benefits of travel. Mr Goodman's Club 18-30 holidays sum up the travel industry's judgment of the aspirations of its customers: Blackpool with sun.

The Henley Centre's recent conclusion to its *Leisure Futures* report is that to continue to offer "a holiday in Benidorm cheek by jowl with millions of other Brits" will spell doom for the £3.6 billion a year package tour

industry. The sun and sand package, invented by the British 40 years ago on the back of a surplus of wartime Dakota aircraft, reached its apogee in the 1980s when 12.5 million Britons flocked to the beaches of Benidorm, Malaga and Corfu. At first they were escaping post-war rationing and willing to accept brutal concrete buildings, poor service and overcrowding in substandard hotels. The industry had found its short-sighted formula.

In the early 1970s between two and three million people headed to the beaches of the Mediterranean on a package tour each summer. They stayed in cheap, purpose-built hotels and apartments and fought for every inch of beach.

The bus driver, the milkman and the car assembly worker could take their families to Spain at an affordable price. In 1975 a family of four could enjoy a fortnight in Spain for £300 all in. By 1978 4.5 million took package holidays. That grew to 8.5 million in 1985, 10.6 million in 1986 and

reached 12.5 million in 1989.

In the 1980s tour operators like Harry Goodman thought they knew what their customers wanted: a cheap fortnight near the beach, a commodity holiday where a deep tan was the ultimate souvenir. The package bubble burst when increasingly affluent holidaymakers began to demand more comforts, more space, more excitement. The tour operators responded by offering more exotic destinations, and even "theme evenings" where local cuisine could be sampled. It was too little, too late.

By popularising foreign travel the Intasuns had made it mundane. For most Britons the first experience of travelling abroad was a package holiday. But a new generation learnt that schoolboy French and schoolgirl Spanish actually worked. Two beers, a meal or a hotel room could be ordered without much difficulty. Suddenly they were free of the package operators' thrall.

The biggest blow came from France

stories in the tabloids. The headline "Salou: killed my husband" above a report of a typhoid outbreak in a Spanish resort in 1989 was typical. Although it proved untrue, the resort's image was damaged forever. Mediterranean magic was replaced by larger louts and violence.

Benidorm spent millions of pounds on cleaning up its image. But Thomson cut the number of holidays it was offering and the new Benidorm has never really emerged.

There has been the "killer seaweed" on the Adriatic, the unfinished hotels in Turkey, the swimming pools that are not next to the apartment blocks, and the final straw perhaps - the delays at airports caused by strikes action by air traffic controllers in France and Spain.

The package holiday industry of the future will give an individual itinerary to suit every member of the family while retaining the trouble-free travelling arrangements that make mass market package holidays so easy.

Millionaire is jailed for drug plot

A millionaire drugs dealer was jailed for 20 years yesterday, and his accomplice, a milkman, was sentenced to 16 years after being found guilty at Southwark crown court of plotting to smuggle 20 kilograms of heroin, with a street value of £3.5 million, to Britain from Pakistan.

Judge Laurie said that anyone smuggling drugs worth over £1 million could expect a prison term of at least 14 years.

The pair were filmed in a London hotel as they planned distribution of the drugs after being lured into a video trap by customs officers following a tip-off. The millionaire, Mohammed Shabazz, aged 32 and described as a respected merchant from Lahore, Pakistan, was the organiser of the racket, and Khalid Latif, aged 37, a milkman, of Salford, Birmingham, was his link man.

Libel award

Frank Carter, the former Flying Squad chief, yesterday won "substantial" libel damages from the *Mail on Sunday*, which quoted Stephen Waddell, whom police shot during the hunt for David Martin, as saying he had been the victim of a smear since the shooting. The High Court was told that this would have been taken as suggesting that Mr Carter was responsible for the smear, because it had not been made clear that a false claim about Mr Waddell in Mr Carter's book, *The Sharp End*, was due to an editing error.

Protest charges

Thirteen men arrested in an anti-hunt protest on Thursday during scuffles as guests arrived at the Grosvenor House hotel, Mayfair, for *Horse and Hound* magazine's ball were remanded on unconditional bail at Marlborough Street magistrates' court yesterday. Warrants were issued for the arrest of five guests, including a building company director, who failed to appear on rowdiness charges after clashing with demonstrators.

Patient on mend

Debbie Wright, aged 23, of Leeds, was making good progress at Paymouth Hospital, Cambridge, yesterday after receiving in a nine-hour operation the heart, lungs and liver of a teenage youth killed in a road accident. Miss Wright, a cystic fibrosis sufferer, had been waiting nine months for a transplant.

Tea and drug

Clara White, aged 61 and a grandmother, celebrated a bingo win by spending £50 on cannabis for spicing her tea to soothe her aches. Horseferry Road magistrates' court was told yesterday. Police raided her home at Lambeth Walk and seized 30.38 grams of cannabis resin. Sentence was deferred for six months.

Thailand trial

Patricia Cahill, from Birmingham, charged with heroin trafficking in Bangkok, yesterday told a Thai juvenile court that a man had paid for her trip to Thailand, but that she had not known her luggage contained drugs. Miss Cahill, arrested last July when 17, was giving evidence for the first time. The case resumes on April 4.

Wife cleared

Evelyn "Mary-Lou" Raggett, aged 55, was cleared yesterday at the Central Criminal Court of the murder of her millionaire husband, Lewis, aged 57, at their home at Ash, Surrey, and of hiring contract killers to murder him.

Clamp report

Police have prepared a file for the Crown Prosecution Service after a patrol car was clamped at a Lincoln store while officers dealt with a reported shop-lifting case. Legal experts say the clamping firm could be prosecuted for obstructing police.

Back to the mini and psychedelia

By LIZ SMITH
FASHION EDITOR

THE King's Road is once more the focus for fashion enthusiasts. The London Designer Show, British fashion's latest showcase, is installed in the Duke of York's barracks in Chelsea. More than 150 exhibitors have opened their order books to international retailers for four days there as top designers parade their collections for autumn.

The mini dresses and psychedelic colours of the Sixties are back. Caroline Charles, the first to show yesterday, revived the short, pinafore tunic worn over skinny sweaters and leggings. Her short sack dresses in crisp dogtooth checks are worn under swing coats in vibrant orange, acid green and brown.



Model wear: strapless mini dress by Caroline Charles at the London Designer Show in Chelsea.

Review, page 24

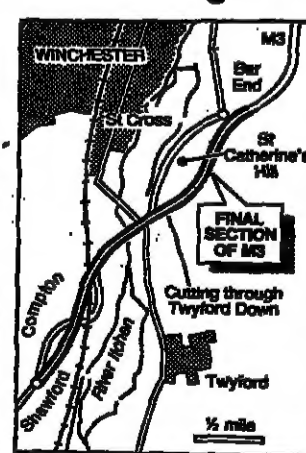
Private toll tunnel scheme could save Twyford Down

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY
ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

MALCOLM Rifkind, the secretary of state for transport, is considering a plan for a privately funded toll tunnel that would save Twyford Down in Hampshire from destruction by the M3.

The scheme would be a new departure in making the market work for the environment, and could extend popular capitalism by attracting small investors. The idea has come from the Twyford Down Association, the Winchester-based campaign group fighting to save the down, which is one of the most protected landscapes in England.

Under present plans, announced last year by Mr Rifkind's predecessor, Cecil Parkinson, the down would be sliced in two by the final section of the M3 in a chalk



Where the M3 will run cutting 400ft wide and 100ft deep. The government has refused to find from public funds the £100 million cost of a tunnel to take the motorway underneath the down as it skirts Winchester. Mr Rifkind, however, is known to

be keen to save the down and has now been offered a possible solution with the idea of a toll tunnel that would be built and operated by the private sector.

The campaigners are confident that there are institutions willing to provide the finance, in particular the increasing number of "green funds" that make investments on an ethical basis. However, they also want to invite participation from small investors in the manner of the government's recent privatisations. Barbara Bryant, one of the leading campaigners, said: "This would allow our community not only to find a solution, but to profit from one."

The association has proposed to Mr Rifkind that a feasibility study be prepared for his consideration, and members are likely to meet him later this month.

Couple sought over Grimsby lions escape

By ALICE THOMAS

FOUR lions that stalked the streets of Grimsby for two hours might have been set free, police said yesterday. A man and woman were seen near the lions' cage at Chipperfield's circus shortly before the animals escaped, and Supt Bob Bishop said that the police were considering the possibility of sabotage.

John Chipperfield, the lion tamer and brother of the owner of the circus, said: "This could quite possibly be sabotage because there was a

hole in the tunnel netting which leads to their cage." He said it was the first time in 20 years he had known of lions escaping from the circus.

The man was white, in his mid-thirties, slim-built and wearing a light brown raincoat. The woman was also white, thin with dark hair tied back and wearing a jacket. Mr Bishop said that the police were examining a rope that might have been cut. "If someone did let those lions loose it was grossly and criminally irres-

ponsible. There were hundreds of people in the area at the time."

Parents and children fled screaming from the big top when the lions broke out of their cages in the ring and ran out into the street during a performance near the town centre. A message was relayed by loudspeaker telling the audience that two buses had been dispatched to allow people to get off the streets.

PC Ron Harrison told yesterday how he rescued a man who was being

attacked by a lioness. "It was just like a lion pulling a wildebeest down," he said. "It grabbed him by the back of the neck and lunged with its full weight. It let go only when I drove into it with my car." The victim, Michael Strand, of Grimsby, required 21 stitches in his wounds.

A circus worker said the lions - called Tanya, Carmen, Sheila and Milahad - were rounded up by circus hands and the police. Last night they were back in the ring.

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Where does it go? Bill Frost on unease among cash-raisers

Charities call for tighter laws to reassure public

SCOPE for charity fraud and abuse has never been greater, a senior administrator with Barnardo's, the young people's welfare organisation, has warned. Keith Manley, director of finance, said that it was feared that such crimes were increasing and going unchecked.

"The people who give must be sure that their money is going to the right cause. It is imperative that the rules are seen to be as watertight as possible. Public confidence is at stake," he said. Other charities said existing safeguards were inadequate and called for new legislation.

The big charities are calling for the tightening of laws to tackle crime, maladministration and simple inefficiency. They fear that private and corporate donations to the charity industry, an estimated £13 billion last year, are not adequately protected.

Enhanced powers for the Charity Commission are being sought to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities for policing more than 170,000 organisations in England and Wales. Robin Guthrie, chief charity commissioner, said: "Without new legislation we shall not be as effective in our work as Parliament and the public want us to be."

Tory backbench MPs have expressed disquiet in recent weeks over the commission's effectiveness. They are concerned at the time taken by the commission to investigate complaints and say that it is too willing to tolerate overly political activities by some charities.

The charities would welcome legislation to ensure that every organisation, particularly new ones, had to register with the commission and submit full accounts. There is now no way of checking that all charities are using adequate accounting methods. A bill aimed at closing the loopholes was promised in the present Parliament, but it has yet to be tabled.

Nick Kavanagh, chief



Guthrie: commission must have more powers

	Voluntary income	Total income	Charity expenditure	Fund-raising expenditure	Admin expenditure	Total expenditure
Oxfam	49,286	65,718	46,995	7,417	2,023	56,435
National Trust	43,418	65,122	59,932	5,489	5,489	70,910
Royal National Lifeboat Inst	40,487	47,422	24,059	4,526	1,847	30,432
Imperial Cancer Res Fund	40,285	48,037	44,770	3,493	685	48,948
Save the Children Fund	36,502	51,557	37,043	5,117	1,356	43,516
Cancer Research Campaign	31,889	38,128	36,422	2,273	717	39,412
Swanton Army	29,857	55,598	43,708	1,859	2,713	48,380
Charity Projects Ltd	27,559	27,559	7,447	152	152	7,751
Barnardo's	25,778	61,249	44,984	6,220	1,849	53,053
NSPCC	22,868	28,832	22,410	2,541	1,105	26,056

Figures are for financial years that ended during 1990

accountant with Oxfam UK, said reform of the Charities Act 1960 was long overdue. "Cases of fraud and maladministration are not endemic to the system. However, when they do happen public confidence is shaken and we all get tarred with the same brush."

Mr Manley called for closer monitoring of newly established charities. "It is during the first couple of years that problems emerge. I am not talking about deliberate fraud, although that is sometimes the case."

"What concerns us almost as much is maladministration: a new charity spending the bulk of its income on salaries and overheads instead of the cause itself."

David Forrest, secretary of the Charity Commission, said: "We want our powers to tackle

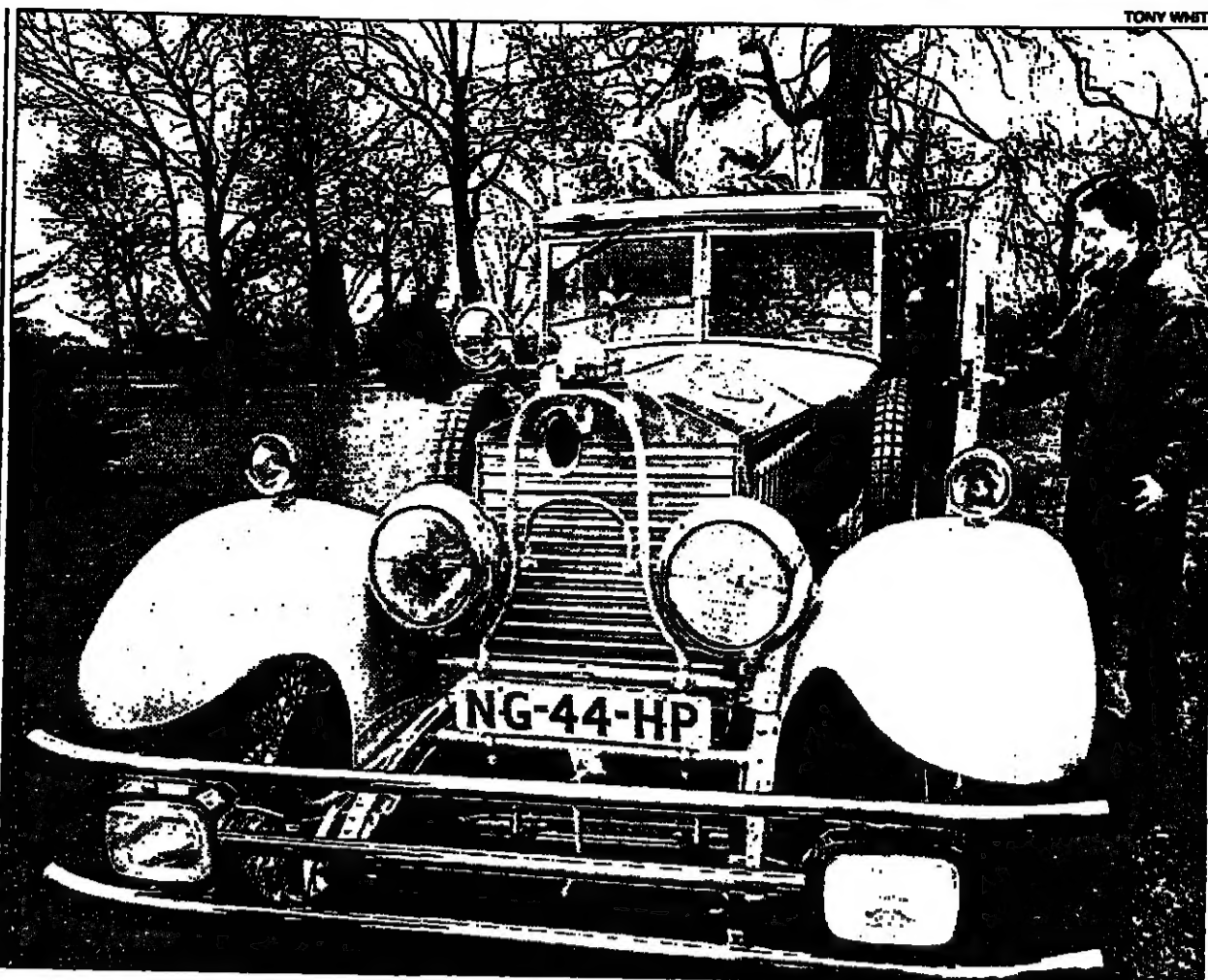
disquiet over its role. Last year 450 cases of alleged abuse were investigated. A quarter involved claims of deliberate fraud, a third concerned changes of maladministration and 10 per cent arose from allegations that funds raised had gone on to the wrong cause."

The Charity Commission has been accused by leading members of the Conservative backbench home affairs committee of political bias because it has taken too long to complete an investigation into Oxfam.

The findings of the enquiry, launched after the charity began a campaign supporting sanctions against South Af-

rica, have yet to be published. The International Freedom Foundation, a free-market think tank, said last month: "Delays in completing the investigation, which began in April 1990, lead to the suspicion that the commission is in need of a radical shake-up of its structures and at worst is politically biased itself."

MPs want an ombudsman appointed to deal with complaints, believing that the commission has too often displayed sympathies for radical Third World charities. David Forrest said pointed out that the commission was well used to criticism from both ends of the political spectrum.



Going in for the kill in comfort: This 1926 20-horsepower Rolls-Royce, custom-built for tiger shooting, is to be included in a Christie's auction on Monday at the Hurlingham Club, London. The vehicle was ordered by the

Maharaja of Bharatpur in India and rebuilt by G. Wylder and Co to include "dy-up front seats" so that he could pop up through the sun roof opening to bag his kill. Willem Hafkamp, of The Netherlands, its owner, and his son

Albert, say that the car, expected to fetch up to £50,000, also has a klixon to scare sacred cows off the road. The Indian government has recently restricted the sale of classic cars introduced during the days of the Raj.

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Doubt cast on police statements

By STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

SCIENTIFIC analysis cast doubt on pocket books and statements involving ten detectives who dealt with the Birmingham Six case, the Court of Appeal was told yesterday.

The dates when interviews were recorded as having taken place were altered in three pocket books, David Baxendale, a Home Office scientist, said. There were different inks on the pages of some books, and in a statement involving a man on trial with the six, the original was changed and two pages substituted.

Thirteen officers who took part in the investigation of the Birmingham Six have been linked in court to irregularities. They were in a team from the West Midlands force whose work ended with the convictions of Patrick Hill, Hugh Callaghan, John Walker, Richard McKenny, Gerard Hunter and William Power for the Birmingham public house bombings in November 1974 in which 21 people died.

Dr Baxendale said that dates recorded for some interviews had been changed. The original dates in two of the pocket books showed that the notes of interviews in November 1974 were written up in 1975. The dates were altered to put the notes nearer to the time the interviews took place.

Questioned by Graham Boal, senior treasury counsel, Dr Baxendale agreed that he had found nothing "scientifically sinister" among most of the pocket books, notes and witness statements which he examined. There was nothing wrong with the confessions which four of the men were alleged to have made. The appeal continues on Monday.

High-flyer to head prisons

By QUENTIN COWDRY
HOME AFFAIRS
CORRESPONDENT

A WHITEHALL high-flyer who is determined to increase the pace of reform in Britain's jails is to take charge of the prison service later this year, it emerged yesterday. Christopher Train, the current director-general, is to retire six months early.

Mr Train, aged 59, is believed to have been disappointed by the criticism that was made of senior management in the recently published Woolf report. Into last year's jail riots. However, it is unclear whether he was pressured into leaving early.

His successor is Joe Pilling, a member of the service's governing board for the past three and a half years, who at 45 is young to have been appointed head of such an important Whitehall department. He will be pressed by ministers to implement rapid reforms to enhance conditions for inmates and to make the prison estate less riot-prone.

Mr Pilling, due to take over in the late summer, will also be under pressure to provide the service with more dynamic leadership and to pay greater heed than his predecessor to media relations. Lord Justice Woolf said the service required "more visible" leadership.

The prospective director-general indicated that he had taken the message on board yesterday by agreeing to talk against the advice of his media managers.

Mr Pilling said: "This is a difficult time for the prison service and it's going to be under the spotlight in the next few years." He added: "Because of what Lord Justice Woolf said, so will I." The prospect, he confessed, was "somewhat daunting".

The first ever national Crime Prevention Week will run from 15th to 20th April 1991.

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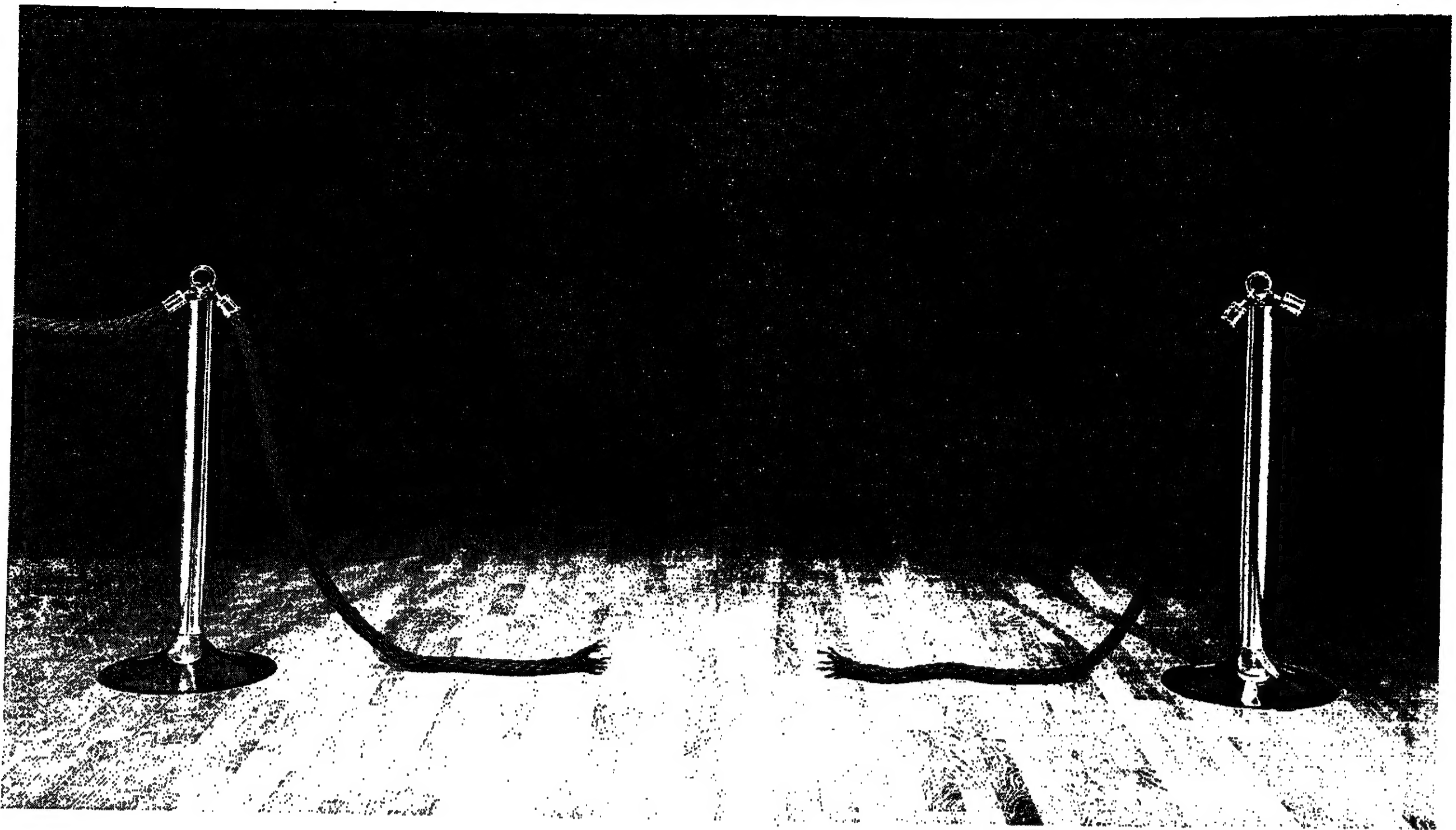
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Allied lack of will may allow Saddam to escape punishment



Saddam could insist on trying allied prisoners

CRIME and punishment go hand in hand. But when the offence is horrific enough, society sometimes cannot muster the will to enforce the law. President Saddam Hussein of Iraq and the members of his Revolutionary Command Council may benefit from this phenomenon.

In international law, responsibility attaches to waging war in three different ways. Firstly, the aggressor state itself is guilty of having committed an international crime. International society, however, does not demand retribution. While reparations can, of course, be required to compensate for the destruction that was caused, punitive damages are not permissible.

Secondly, there is individual responsibility. The Iraqi officers

and men who committed violations of humanitarian law in the theatre of operations are liable for war crimes. In addition to Kuwait and other affected states, Iraq itself could exercise jurisdiction, but this prospect would become relevant only after a change in government in Baghdad. As the enforcement of justice cannot rely on the vicissitudes of upheaval and revolution in Iraq, the immediate and detailed processing of prisoners of war by the coalition forces with a view to prosecuting those guilty of war crimes before reparation would be essential. This could well take months.

The latest security council resolution on Iraq, however, is conspicuously silent when it comes to war crimes. Rather, the principle of a rapid return of

Fear of being tarred with the same brush may possibly underlie the world's reluctance to bring aggressors to justice for their war crimes, Marc Weller writes

prisoners of war in accordance with the relevant Geneva convention is emphasised. But under the Third Geneva Convention, those POWs who are guilty of war crimes do not have to be repatriated immediately and can be convicted and made to serve their sentence.

Iraq, however, might invoke the same principle. The authorities in Baghdad could demand that the prisoners they hold should also be put on trial — for the alleged indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets, say. This spurious claim

would be designed to induce the coalition forces to contemplate a straight exchange of prisoners, cutting out the possibility of war-crimes trials.

The question of the responsibility of the political leadership of Iraq is more complex. Responsibility for breaches of the Geneva law is not limited to those who actually committed breaches of its provisions in the field. Those who gave the orders from Baghdad are also liable to prosecution.

In addition, the political leader-

ship could be confronted with the third element of international responsibility: the charge of having committed a crime against peace by waging an aggressive war. Again, the international coalition, and with it the UN, are apparently not all that keen on having to deal with the issue. It is not referred to in any of the resolutions on Kuwait, although the UN's International Law Commission has been hard at work over the past years to draft a code of offences against the peace and security of mankind. That code reflects and refines the principles enunciated at Nuremberg and Tokyo. But there has been virtually no application of those principles since the end of the second world war, despite the intervening plenty of war and violence. General Leopoldo Galtieri, for example, was tried in Argentina for incompetence in managing the Falklands war, not for crimes against peace.

Other states are also reluctant to embrace those principles. America was found guilty by the International Court of Justice of having used illegal force when it undertook armed subversion against Nicaragua. Would that judgment imply that President Reagan, who was in office then, was individually responsible and can be tried in any jurisdiction? These evaluations may well explain the reluctance of international society to take its own draft code on offences against peace seriously. (The author is a research fellow at St Catharine's College and at the Research Centre for International Law at Cambridge University.)

UNITED STATES

Washington backtracks on call for disarmament

By MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON AND PAUL ADAMS IN JERUSALEM

AS JAMES Baker, the Secretary of State, met General Norman Schwarzkopf, who commanded the allied forces in the Gulf war, at the start of his tour of the Middle East in Riyadh, the Saudi capital, yesterday, it became clear in Washington that the Bush administration has quietly backtracked on one of its previously stated postwar aims: curbing the relentless build up of conventional arms in the Middle East.

After his meeting with Mr Baker, who later met Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, and King Fahd, General Schwarzkopf told reporters that he hoped to send American troops home from the Gulf "as fast as we possibly can". He added, however, that it might take "a little

longer to get the equipment home".

In Jerusalem yesterday

Palestinian leaders cautiously

welcomed Mr Baker's re-

ported offer of talks during his

visit to Israel next week. But

American and Israeli officials

said they doubted such a

meeting would take place.

American sources expressed

amazement. "We're very

much taken aback," said one,

adding that no instructions

had been issued from Wash-

ington to arrange a meeting.

However, he said, enquiries

were being made.

The confusion over Mr

Baker's remark to reporters on

his way to Riyadh has, in fact,

placed Palestinians in the

unusual position of welcom-

ing an encounter which may

never occur. In recent years

local delegations have boy-

cotted planned meetings with

American and British foreign

secretaries.

At the same time foreign

relief organisations renewed

their criticism of the seven-

week curfew in the occupied

territories and urged the inter-

national community to end

the occupation by Israel.

Under the title, *What James*

Baker should know about the

other occupation, the Co-

ordinating Committee of In-

ternational Non-Govern-

mental Organisations said the

Israeli authorities were "pre-

pared to destroy the economic

and social infrastructure of the

West Bank and Gaza Strip".

The West Bank and Gaza

Strip remain under strict

night-time curfew.

Late last week in Wash-

ington, the administration

asked Congress to approve the

\$1.6 billion (£850 million) sale

of sophisticated F16 war-

planes to Egypt, one of its

closest partners in the co-

alition against Iraq, a clear

reversal of its policy on con-

ventional arms in the Middle

East.

The administration is un-

derstood also to have submit-

ted a classified report to

Congress detailing the possi-

ble sale of new arms worth

\$18 billion to five coalition

partners, Saudi Arabia, the

United Arab Emirates, Bah-

rain, Egypt and Turkey.

As recently as February 6

Mr Baker listed five key

challenges that America

would have to meet to secure a

lasting postwar peace in the

Middle East. One of these was

to achieve "effective arms

control and prevent prolifera-

tion of conventional weapons

and weapons of mass destruc-

tion", he said.

Cause to celebrate, page 10

Letters, page 11

Arabs held by Britain are freed

London — The Home Office yesterday freed 33 Arabs detained during the war (writes Quentin Cowdry). Kenneth Baker, the home secretary, said they now posed "a greatly diminished risk" to security.

Mr Baker also revoked restriction orders on another six Iraqis and two Arabs. He said: "those who had been deported would be able to seek readmission to Britain."

Civil rights groups, who had protested about the detentions, said the announcement indicated that the Home Office's claims were bogus.

Kuwaiti delay

London — Kuwaiti opposition leaders said here yesterday they were postponing a conference on democracy to allow Kuwaitis inside the country to take part (Michael Binyon writes). They are seeking permission to hold the meeting in Kuwait City, but are not hopeful because of the imposition of martial law.

Talks on aid

Luxembourg — Officials from 27 nations meet here on Monday to co-ordinate aid for Middle East countries affected by the crisis. They will discuss increasing aid and distributing funds promised to Egypt, Jordan, Turkey and Israel. (AP)

Journalists safe

Baghdad — Iraq says 40 Western journalists missing in southern Iraq have been handed over to the Red Cross in the Iraqi capital. (Reuters)

Schwarzkopf storms into everyday slang

From SUSAN ELLICOTT IN WASHINGTON

THE mystery is over. One of the first things Norman Schwarzkopf will do once he returns home is to dress up as Father Christmas.

The four-star general's wife of 22 years, Brenda, let this slip yesterday after speculation among columnists about her husband's plans when Operation Desert Storm is finally over. "We will definitely relive Christmas," she told CNN television, "because Norman always plays Santa Claus and we missed it."

Mrs Schwarzkopf, aged 49, has become a star herself as the commander of United States forces in the Gulf has gained international acclaim. Members of Congress gave her a standing ovation in January

when President Bush invited her to his State of the Union address, saying she held "a special place in all American hearts" as a symbol of the strength of families with relatives serving in the Middle East.

She has also given some insight into Storm's "Norman" character: a lovable man with a compulsion to play board games with like to play board games with him because he's a sore loser."

She plans to greet her husband with a meal of duck, pork-fried rice and a bowl of mint chocolate chip ice cream, his favourite meal, after his seven months in the

desert eating military rations. When he retires this summer after 35 years in the army, she predicts a series of outdoors holidays similar to a 10-day Alaskan camping trip they went on years ago with their three children, now aged 20, 18 and 13. Mrs Schwarzkopf was noticeably more tolerant of her interviewer's questions than the general would have been.

The general is now so popular that his name is creeping into American slang as a verb meaning to conquer a problem as quickly and cheaply as possible. According to *The Washington Times*, the phrase "you can't Schwarzkopf the drug problem" was first heard on local radio.



Brenda Schwarzkopf: a symbol in her own right

GULF SECURITY

Assad allays Iranian fears

FROM REUTERS IN DAMASCUS

A TOP Iranian delegation left Syria yesterday with an assurance that Tehran would have a future role in a Gulf security order drawn up by eight Arab members of the American-led alliance that drove Iraq from Kuwait.

Diplomats and political sources said President al-Assad of Syria had allayed Iranian concern over the security pact, which was agreed in Damascus on Wednesday. Iran's vice-president, Hassan Habibi, and the foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, had had two days of "good, fruitful and cordial" talks with President Assad and members of his government, according to an Iranian official.

The sources said President Assad had assured the delegation that Iran would have a role in the future regional security order, allaying Iranian concern over the "Damascus declaration". "The meeting was very useful and successful... It cleared all signs of Iranian sensitivity and misunderstandings of the pact. The president absorbed and defused Iranian worries."

During the meetings, Syrian officials emphasised the "importance of Iran's role" in the region. Iran denounced the security pact, which envisages a force consisting mainly of Egyptian and Syrian troops. It has been at odds with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states over their close ties with America.

RAF

Tornados fly last mission

THE RAF Tornado F3s flew their last operational mission here yesterday. The final sortie, involving two jets, landed at the King Abdul Aziz airbase in Dhahran at 7pm marking the end of the round-the-clock combat air defence sorties which have continued since August 12 (Michael Evans writes from Dhahran).

The scene at the base is now like a giant film set, with hundreds of people engaged in packing up and dismantling equipment, removing temporary air crew facilities and preparing for the return home of the combat planes.

It is still a wartime setting, but the stars of the show are thinking only of their families, of how they are going to adjust to a slower-moving life, and of what the future holds.

The first Tornados are expected to fly back to Britain and Germany early next week. The Tornado F3 air crews of 43 and 29 Squadrons, and the Tornado GR1 crews of 31 Squadron, admit it is going to be difficult to switch from war here to peace at home.

Group Captain Cliff Spink, the 44-year-old force commander at the Dhahran base, responsible for about 1,500 RAF personnel, flew one of the last sorties himself yesterday. He wanted to fly over the battlefields in Kuwait and see for himself the devastation caused by Iraq's destruction of the oil wells.

He said: "Despite the marvellous achievements made here, with the clinically superb bombing campaign, I think everyone will leave here with the feeling of disbelief that someone, clearly without morals, could have caused such an ecological disaster."

He added: "As soon as you get airborne and look north you can see the smoke from

the oil fields. As you fly over, you can see that the sand is turning black everywhere from the soot. Down wind, the smoke spreads for hundreds of miles." The air crews flying their last sorties yesterday

came back with stories of a new hazard facing aircraft over Kuwait. Flocks of vultures, hovering at up to 2,000 feet, have begun to circle the battlefields, grim testimony to the allies' campaign.

FRANCE

Paris retreats from demand for conference

FROM JOHN PHILLIPS IN PARIS

IN A surprising move, France has indicated that for the time being it is renouncing its longstanding demand for the immediate convening after the Gulf war of an international peace conference on the Middle East, diplomats said yesterday.

Paris has by no means definitively given up its search for one or several such conferences to try to obtain a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement to resolve the Palestinian issue, the Arab-Israeli conflict and the problems of Lebanon, they said.

But Roland Dumas, the foreign minister, said yesterday that France would rejoice if the Middle East tour by James Baker, the American Secretary of State, which began yesterday, allowed a way out of the impasse to be found.

He added that France had not given up the idea of an international conference at some point in the future. French leaders continued to believe that a conference would be "indispensable at one moment or other of the peace process", he said.

Western diplomats said the change of tack in Paris appeared designed to avoid accusations from Washington that France might sabotage

the peace process by pursuing its traditional independent and maverick foreign policy.

With President Mitterrand scheduled to meet President Bush in Martinique next Thursday, Paris is anxious to avoid the kind of criticism that London levelled at France after President Mitterrand launched a last-ditch peace plan in the United Nations on January 15.

Equally, France does not want to wave a red rag at Israel by at this time pushing the international conference idea too heavily, one French diplomat said.

By emphasising that France was standing back to give Washington room to manoeuvre, Paris was also keeping up the pressure on the United States to take some concrete steps to resolve regional problems, including tackling Israel on the fate of the occupied Arab territories, he said.

"The two essential points for us are, first of all, that everyone speak to each other, and then that the UN is involved in the final solution so as to give it the approval of the international community," the diplomat added.

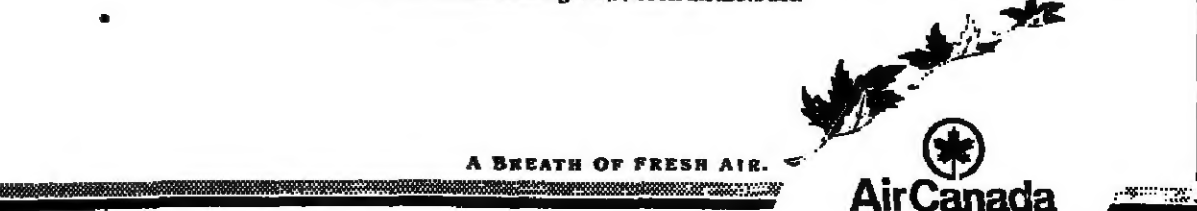
On Wednesday M Dumas said that "what is important is that the Israeli-Palestinian dialogue start".

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What we ask, however, is you book and pay for your flight before March 15th and stay for a minimum of 7 days and no more than 21 days*.

*Ticketing and payment to be made within 48 hours of booking. Savings related to advance purchase fares subject to conditions and availability. There is a weekend surcharge of £27.00 for the above fare.



OPPOSITION TO SADDAM

Rafsanjani urges Baath regime to step down

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

DESPITE reports that loyalist forces were getting the upper hand in Iraq, fierce fighting continued yesterday as the president stepped up his campaign against the Baathist government. President Rafsanjani, in a marked break with Iranian neutrality, yesterday called on President Saddam and his ruling party to step down, saying their attempt to crush rebellion and hold on to power "will be their last mistake".

Addressing worshippers gathered at Tehran university for Friday prayers, Rafsanjani said Iran would co-operate with Iraq only if Saddam's Baath party surrenders "to the will of the people".

His sermon was carried by Tehran radio, monitored in Nicosia. It was the first time an Iranian leader had openly backed the revolt in Iraq. "Saddam is making a mistake while suppressing the people," Rafsanjani said. "This is the worst mistake. If the Baathists will not listen to the voice of the people, it will be their last mistake. If the Baathists surrender to the will of the people, we in Iran are ready for co-operation." It would be a great mistake for

the Iraqi Baath party to "paint the final page of its record with blood".

Saudi leaders repeated their denunciations of Saddam, saying they could not live with him. In Damascus, an Iraqi opposition leader said Arab states had pledged military aid to overthrow him.

Jalal Talebani, an exiled Iraqi opposition leader, told a press conference that several Arab countries had responded positively to requests from rebels for weapons and food.

Anti-Saddam forces claimed they were still holding Basra, the scene of bloody pitched battles between Shia opposition groups and the Republican Guard for the past two days. They said that demonstrations and fighting were also continuing in the southern Iraqi cities of Samarra, Nasiriyah, Diwaniyah, Muthana, Amarah and Shemoonia. A student who left Basra on Wednesday told reporters in Damascus that 400 people had been executed after an anti-Saddam protest by about 1,000 people.

According to western intelligence reports, the Republican Guard and army units sent to the south were now crushing the rebels in bitter street fighting. Opposition had spread to more than 20 towns, however.

The main threat to Saddam was not from the Shia uprising or from Iraq's neighbours but from disaffected members of his inner political and military circle, according to American intelligence assessments. The view in Washington was that the rebellions by the Kurds and Shia population might prolong Saddam's control because it would rally the military behind him in an effort to prevent the break-up of Iraq.

US intelligence agencies believe there is serious discontent among Saddam's close allies. Elements in the party and the Republican Guard are said to be angry that he led the country into a ruinous war.



Rafsanjani break with Iranian neutrality



Homeward bound: a young Kuwaiti boy, wrapped in his father's coat, waiting with hundreds of other refugees near the Iraqi border to be allowed to return home

DETAINEES FREED

Thousand hostages cross border back to Kuwait

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS ON THE IRAQI-KUWAIT BORDER

MORE than 1,000 Kuwaiti hostages, held prisoner in Iraq for two weeks, have poured across the border in the first release of an estimated 30,000 Kuwaitis taken by President Saddam Hussein's military.

The prisoners told tales yesterday of terrible crowding in a military camp, drinking water from swamps and eating sparse meals of hard bread and rock-laden rice.

Meanwhile, two foreign

journalists reported missing "during illegal presence in Basra" in southern Iraq. The radio also said two American soldiers, identified as members of the 7th Army Corps, were captured in Basra and that the group was taken to Baghdad on Thursday before transfer to representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

More than a dozen Iraqi military trucks moved the 1,180 Kuwaiti hostages from a military base outside Basra on Thursday. Shortly before midnight they dumped the detainees near the border, where they began a lengthy wait in near-freezing temperatures while Kuwaiti army officers checked their papers.

"It was like hell," said Hami Jamal, aged 27, a computer engineer. "We drank swamp water for days. And for what crime? For being Kuwaitis."

"We are surviving," cried Mansoor al-Baqsi, aged 40, a supervisor for the Kuwait Petroleum Company. "I haven't had a full meal in two weeks." He estimated he had lost about 15lb.

The men were among an estimated 30,000 Kuwaitis taken to Iraq during the occupation of the emirate, according to Kuwait's government-in-exile. The hostages said soldiers captured most of them from their homes between February 21 and 23.

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Junkyard hunt for souvenirs

FROM REUTERS IN AL-MUTLA, KUWAIT

ALLIED troops are scavenging through "Ambush Alley" for souvenirs of the Iraqi army's final bloody rout and many are horrified by the carnage all around them.

Allied aircraft halted the desperate flight of troops from Kuwait at a bottleneck on the Kuwait City-Basra highway. The road at the foot of the Muthla ridge is a vast junkyard of war. Hundreds of tanks and other armoured vehicles and stolen civilian cars lie crushed and broken around the road, pushed into heaps by military bulldozers.

"No human being should be allowed to do this to another human being. No one," said a British soldier, surveying the wreckage from the top of an Iraqi tank. "They didn't stand a chance. It's disgusting," he said unbending the heavy machinegun from the wrecked tank. The gun was to become a regimental souvenir.

Apart from guns, grenades and artillery shells the junkyard offers a vast array of essential supplies. Tyres and wheels are in short supply in Kuwait. The scrapheap offers a selection from lorries to new limousines and sports cars.

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Mandela trial witness denies sex at church

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

THE key state witness in the trial of Winnie Mandela and three other people on kidnapping and assault charges testified yesterday that he rebuked a church minister after he was told to sleep with him and another man in a double bed.

Kenneth Kgase, aged 31, who claims he was whipped and beaten by Mrs Mandela after being abducted with three others from a Methodist Church manse in Soweto, a black township refuge, underwent gruelling cross-examination during his third consecutive day in the witness box at the Rand Supreme Court in Johannesburg.

Mrs Mandela and her three co-defendants have denied the charges of kidnapping and assault.

Mr Kgase said under questioning by George Bizos, counsel for Mrs Mandela, that the Rev Paul Verryn made a habit of asking newcomers to

the manse to share his bed. On his first night he was told to sleep in a double bed where Mr Verryn and another man joined him.

He felt the minister's action of kicking him when the three of them awoke in the morning was strange. "I told him not to do it again," Mr Kgase said. He corrected his earlier testimony that he had been "tickled all over his body" to say that he had been tickled all over his lower back.

Although he described the minister's alleged behaviour as strange, he stated that he did not report it to anyone at the time.

Asked about his attitude towards homosexuality, Mr Kgase, his head drooping and looking very tired, said: "I can't judge anything about homosexuality. I don't know if it's a normal way of behaving."

Mr Bizos claimed his behaviour was consistent with someone who would "hear no evil and see no evil". Mr Kgase replied: "I have a right to all those attitudes ... I don't want to be in the way of too many people."

He was challenged why he waited five weeks before reporting several alleged crimes, including the attempted murder of a member of Mrs Mandela's former bodyguards, the Mandela United Football Club, to the police. He said he had been advised to do so by Mr Verryn.

A crisis committee, which included members of several church groups, had been appointed to investigate allegations of sexual abuse at the manse and as it was then still proceeding with its work, Mr Verryn had suggested that they wait until it completed its enquiries before reporting to the police.

The church inquiry found there was no evidence to justify allegations that Mr Verryn had sexually abused youths staying at the manse.

Mr Bizos claimed there was a pattern for newcomers at the manse. "The Rev Verryn made a habit of asking them to spend their first night with him (and Tong Nkosi) on his bed. Following that first night, some would stop sleeping with the Rev Verryn but some would spend several nights," Mr Bizos claimed. Mr Kgase said he had noticed these events but declared that he was unaware of any homosexual activity at the manse.

One of the youths alleged to have been abducted and assaulted, Stompie Moeketsi Seipei, aged 14, was found dead several days later. Mrs Mandela's chief bodyguard, Jerry Richardson, was sentenced to death last year for the murder.

A judicial commission of inquiry last year, which severely condemned the activities of the unit, found that the general had granted approval in principle for such a covert organisation during 1986. Demands for his resignation were renewed last month when a report by the auditor-general implicated him in unauthorised payments to agents of the unit dating back years.

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Calcutta puts ban on UK film team

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

THE Calcutta high court has banned shooting of the British film *City of Joy* anywhere on the city's tarring streets. The decision raises doubts about the film-makers' ability to complete the project in the volatile West Bengal capital, which fears that its reputation for squalor and disease is to be highlighted across the world.

The script has been altered so many times to try to please local politicians that it now has hardly any resemblance to Dominique Lapierre's book, *Jyoti Basu*, West Bengal's chief minister, said in Delhi yesterday that he understood the script had been revised 14 times. Noting that it focused on poverty, he added: "We have wealth in Calcutta, too."

The film-makers' trials are plainly not over yet. Mr Basu revealed that the latest version of the script had been sent to intellectuals in the city for their views. Once their opinions had been received, more talks would be held.

In the meantime, the high court has directed that the film-makers may continue working in an elaborate film set built on the outskirts of Calcutta, but that no location shots will be permitted for two weeks, when the position will be reviewed.

West Bengal's advocate-general, Narayan Gopal, told the court that the script, as it stood, gave an impression that Calcutta was a city of leprosy, cancer, plague, prostitution and mafia. It was a "drain inspector's report".

Counsel for the film producers protested that the central government had approved the script and that there had been no objection at the time from the state government. A large sum of money had been invested in the project.

The film, principally a British investment, is being directed by Roland Joffe (*The Killing Fields* and *The Mission*) and co-produced by Ian Smith. Their project seems to be sinking ever deeper into the Calcutta political mire.

Lapierre's novel is based by the Calcutta intelligentsia, and some Bengali-language newspapers object to foreigners making a film about their city.

Mr Basu pointed out that decisions to allow film crews to operate in India are taken by the Delhi government, not by states. "We didn't invite them. They came and we don't want to stop them. That would not be right. We have serious objections to the book. We don't like some of the things being depicted in the film." Mr Basu said he could not allow the film crew to disrupt Calcutta traffic. Referring to the script, he acknowledged: "We have changed quite a bit of it."

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Maralinga Aborigines want Britain to pay for clean-up

FROM ROBERT COCKBURN IN MARALINGA, AUSTRALIA

HUGHIE Windlass, an Aboriginal elder, swatted at a dense swarm of flies with a stick as he looked over his contaminated Maralinga tribal homeland. "It's too late to say sorry. Our future is broken," he said. "The British have to pay up now."

The Aborigines' decision to complain formally gives the Australian government the go-ahead it needed in its 10-year battle to pursue Britain for a share of the rehabilitation and compensation costs of the Maralinga nuclear testing range in South Australia. The range was abandoned by Britain in 1967, and it has so far refused to accept liability for carrying out this task.

It was an extraordinary meeting held in 45°C temperatures 50 miles west of the old British Maralinga base which is now a ghost town. Tribal leaders from South Australia, the Northern Territory and West Australia, with their lawyers, had gathered there. "I used to travel these lands as a girl," explained Myra Tjurnumutja from Alice Springs. "It is very sad for me to see them like this now."

The Aboriginal community was driven from the area by the nuclear testing between 1953 and 1963. But the full extent of the contamination was only discovered after the community won the land rights to an area they had occupied for thousands of years and began to return in the mid-1980s.

A series of secret tests in which nuclear weapons were blown up, spreading plutonium far beyond the range, were revealed just in time by the South Australia government. Andrew Collett, the Aborigines' lawyer, said

Britain had said nothing of the dangers they faced at the time. A Technical Assessment Group study by Australian, British and American scientists, completed last year, traced the full extent of plutonium on Aboriginal land and the hundreds of tons of contaminated debris left in burial pits round Maralinga. The scientists found that the Aboriginal open-air way of life made them highly vulnerable to the threat of plutonium, the most deadly carcinogen known. The animals they still hunt feed in the most contaminated areas.

Tribal elders are prepared to travel to London to put their

case and demonstrate the terrible damage inflicted on their people, whose survival will be guaranteed only by a return to their lands, they say. A sample of Maralinga plutonium may accompany them to highlight the dangers of an estimated 22 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium discovered in the Tanami region.

Britain's refusal to fund a clean-up is based on two agreements signed with Australia before the full extent of contamination was discovered. Indeed, the 1967 clearing exercise "Operation Bru-

mbie" is now accepted to have covered up the plutonium, making the clean-up even more difficult.

Mr Collett pointed out that, while both Britain and Australia are contributing to the Gulf war environmental disaster, they have been reluctant to clean up one of the world's worst military nuclear messes at Maralinga. In Australia, Maralinga is still seen as an Aboriginal problem rather than one of concern to the country as a whole.

In a statement on the technical study, sent yesterday to the British, Australian and South Australian governments, the Maralinga community spokesman, Archie Barton, said: "Whilst we don't agree with all the reasoning of the TAG report, we acknowledge that it is a thorough, well-researched and co-operative report. In particular, based on our scientific advice, Maralinga Tjurnutja accepts that TAC's standard for safe habitation of five milli sieverts per year is appropriate in these circumstances. Thus approximately 300 square kilometres of land contaminated by plutonium must be cleaned up or fenced off."

His statement adds: "It is technically feasible to clean up this land by removing the top soil and replanting the vegetation. However, given the current clean-up techniques, the community is not keen to solve one environmental disaster by creating what it sees as another. Instead Maralinga Tjurnutja is prepared to have the contaminated region properly fenced and all other contamination secured inside the fenced area, provided that the Maralinga people receive acceptable compensation."

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

THE MAKING OF JOHN MAJOR

EXCLUSIVE PRE-PUBLICATION EXTRACTS FROM THE FIRST IN-DEPTH BIOGRAPHY

TOMORROW

Clifford Longley

Just cause to celebrate

A national thanksgiving service to mark the end of the Gulf war, whether in St Paul's cathedral or elsewhere, demands above all a unifying idea. Otherwise it will succumb to the fractiousness that made much of the religious contribution to the war debate so clumsy and unhelpful. The Bishop of Durham has already fired his warning shot by calling the very suggestion of such a service "obscene".

Deciding to have a service is one thing, deciding what sort of service is another. Even the most pro-war elements in the churches would not want to stage a merely jingoistic celebration of victory. But because most anti-war elements have already concluded, like the Bishop of Durham, that they must boycott such an event, the outcome would most probably be a service which merely reflected the majority view in the nation. That would be safe, and in its own way might even be inspiring, but holding up a spiritual mirror to an already widespread settled opinion is a minimalist solution, playing to the gallery.

Much dowsing through thousands of words is needed to find the spiritual and moral content which transcends the irritable disagreements between churchmen of recent months. But it is buried there, nevertheless, and it is substantial enough to build round it a national religious event. That common thread is the idea of a "new world order".

Those with no knowledge of history will dismiss the phrase as a slogan recently coined by President Bush to cloak America's pursuit of its own interests, but it is older and more worthy than that. A new world order is what religious leaders talked and prayed intensely about before and after both world wars. It was strongly, if subliminally present, in the Falklands service in 1982. It is certainly worth gathering in St Paul's to pray for again.

Military men and women, who will want to be present, will find the concept fits their understanding of what they were asked to risk their lives for. Diplomats could come too: a religious celebration of their arts (with a hint of Christian uplift) would be timely.

Theologically, the idea of a new world order is needed to replace the increasingly ambiguous concept of just war. A genuine new world order is much more about avoiding war than fighting it, though the idea of war fought in the name of world order cannot, at least at this stage in history, be excluded. This is where the just-war theory broke down in the Gulf. The theory is entirely about conflict between two states or alliances, and assumes an otherwise lawless world indifferent to the outcome.

However, the whole world now has a stake in the outcome of every war, because of the existence of international law and the involvement of the United Nations (factors which can be fitted into a traditional just-war analysis only in an arbitrary way).

Such an approach may heal, but it might also point. No country needs a new world order as much

as Israel, for instance, which will never be safe without one. But the first requirement of such an order must be to obey the rules: United Nations Security Council resolutions and Geneva conventions most especially.

The second requirement is that if any country breaks the rules, every other country must immediately interest itself in enforcement, until compliance is secured. A new world order is no soft option. It refuses de Gaulle's cynical remark that countries do not have principles, they only have interests.

That applies not just to countries. Pope John Paul II has made more than 50 references to the Gulf war since last August 2, and has mentioned Kuwait by name just once, one Vatican-watcher has calculated.

This was an extraordinary neglect for which there was no excuse, not even the perverse papal perception of the allied coalition: that Saudi Arabia denies religious freedom to Christians, Syria broke the Christian hold on government in the Lebanon, the United States is a paradise of unchristian hedonism and free thought, and that some of the displaced Palestinians and bombed Iraqis are Christians, but none of the Kuwaitis. That is not about having principles, but about having interests — and prejudices. (Presumably the Pope dismisses the British, Christian or not, as mere cranks.)

Rome is not going to lead a new world order, obviously. So who else might lead? The danger of America doing so is that a nervous world will see it using the new order to throw its weight around and make a fast buck. The British, on the other hand, have a habit of lawfulness second to none, and out of principle not self-interest. The strongest criticism of the British role in the Gulf war was that we were reckless or naive rather than mendacious, of which others were accused. Nobody in Britain thought Iraq should get away with invading Kuwait — for what Iraq had done was illegal.

The British helped conceive both the League of Nations and the United Nations, which were the concrete expression of those many pre- and post-war prayers. The creation of international enterprises dedicated to decency — the Commonwealth, the Anglican Communion — seems to be a British instinct. Any new world order is bound to have British fingerprints all over it. But the diffident British would prefer to be seen praying for it in public, actually putting it into practice behind closed doors.

None of the churches came out of the war covered with distinction. Their generals were all over the place or simply absent, and their NCOs and other ranks displayed a tendency to apocalyptic extremism or grumpy militarism, according to taste.

A national Gulf service which perpetuates such quarrelling would offer not prayer but mere self-satisfaction and recriminatory noise. A Gulf service committing the British to work, pray and even die for law and order in world affairs, however, could move mountains.

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Victory for munitions, not men

John Terraine defends General Haig's war record

As well as the war of attrition symbolised by the Somme and Passchendaele, Field-Marshal Sir Douglas (later Lord) Haig was responsible for the subsequent increase in effectiveness of the British Army and the unquestionable victory that it won in 1918. His reward has been vilification ever since. The latest essay in this unimpressive activity is *Haig's Command: A Reassessment* by Denis Winter (see page 19 of today's Saturday Review).

One product of this poisonous industry has been to distort the picture and impede understanding of the first world war itself. Haig is held up as a symbol of the failure of the war and the incredible stupidity of the manner in which it was conducted. One of the saddest results of this is the devaluing of the vast human tragedy it undeniably contained.

What the British Army experienced between 1916 and 1918 was what every heavily committed army experienced during that war;

its losses were in no way unusual, and those armies which had the misfortune to be heavily committed between 1939 and 1945 had even worse experiences and far heavier losses. Warfare between great powers with mass populations, since the industrial revolution has led remorselessly to mass casualties and mass destruction.

Haig's experience only showed that the British were not exempt. To attempt to personalise the disastrous transactions of modern industrial war is foolishness. This is a bleak topic for those who prefer to trade in "Great Captains", subtle strategies or "thunderbolts of war", but at the heart of 1914-18 is technology, and the mass production of munitions. The Germans did not markedly complain about the *Materialschlacht* — "the war of material" — when they held the

advantage, but as the sheer weight of allied technology overtook them, they rued the horror they had unleashed.

All this is fundamental background of the war that Haig played such a significant part in and no evaluation of his generalship (or any other commander's) is valid without taking this into account.

Even some of his most violent critics have acknowledged that Haig always had a lively interest in technical developments, and indeed, his whole war can be seen as a continual sequence of innovations: new weapons and counter-weapons, new techniques and counter-techniques. Probably the most spectacular was the tank (not so much because of what it actually did as what it became). Without even seeing one, Haig perceived the possibility of their decisive intervention in battle; he gave

them their debut on the Somme and their first big occasion at Cambrai in 1917; they were a large ingredient in launching his final successes.

Under Haig, the numbers in the British Expeditionary Force increased enormously. His general headquarters had to match every branch of government for nearly two million men, while at the same time fighting a war in a foreign country. For all of this there were no blueprints, no previous experience to draw upon.

None of these basic characteristics of the war would have been different if Haig had simply not existed. That was the way it was. What we have to do is assess the performance of Haig and his men in the light of this reality.

There is, however, one further special point to note: Haig's war was a coalition war, and as the

next generation also discovered, these have their special problems. From beginning to end, then to his deep disgust, the British were junior partners to the French, and though he did not like it, Haig understood this and accepted its implications.

Lloyd George called the war "the greatest chapter in our military history", and British soldiers too remained proud. The late Charles Carrington M.C. who joined the army at the age of 17 in 1914 and served through the battles of the Somme and Passchendaele wrote in 1977, with undiminished pride: "In our thousand years of national history there has been one short period (1916-1918) when Britain possessed the most effective army in the world, and used it to win decisive victory." It is a strange thing to be vilified and blamed for, seven decades later.

John Terraine is the author of *The Somme and the Fiftieth* (Scribner & Jackson).

Back to protest politics

The Ribble Valley by-election turned on a single policy, the universally disliked poll tax, says Ivor Crewe

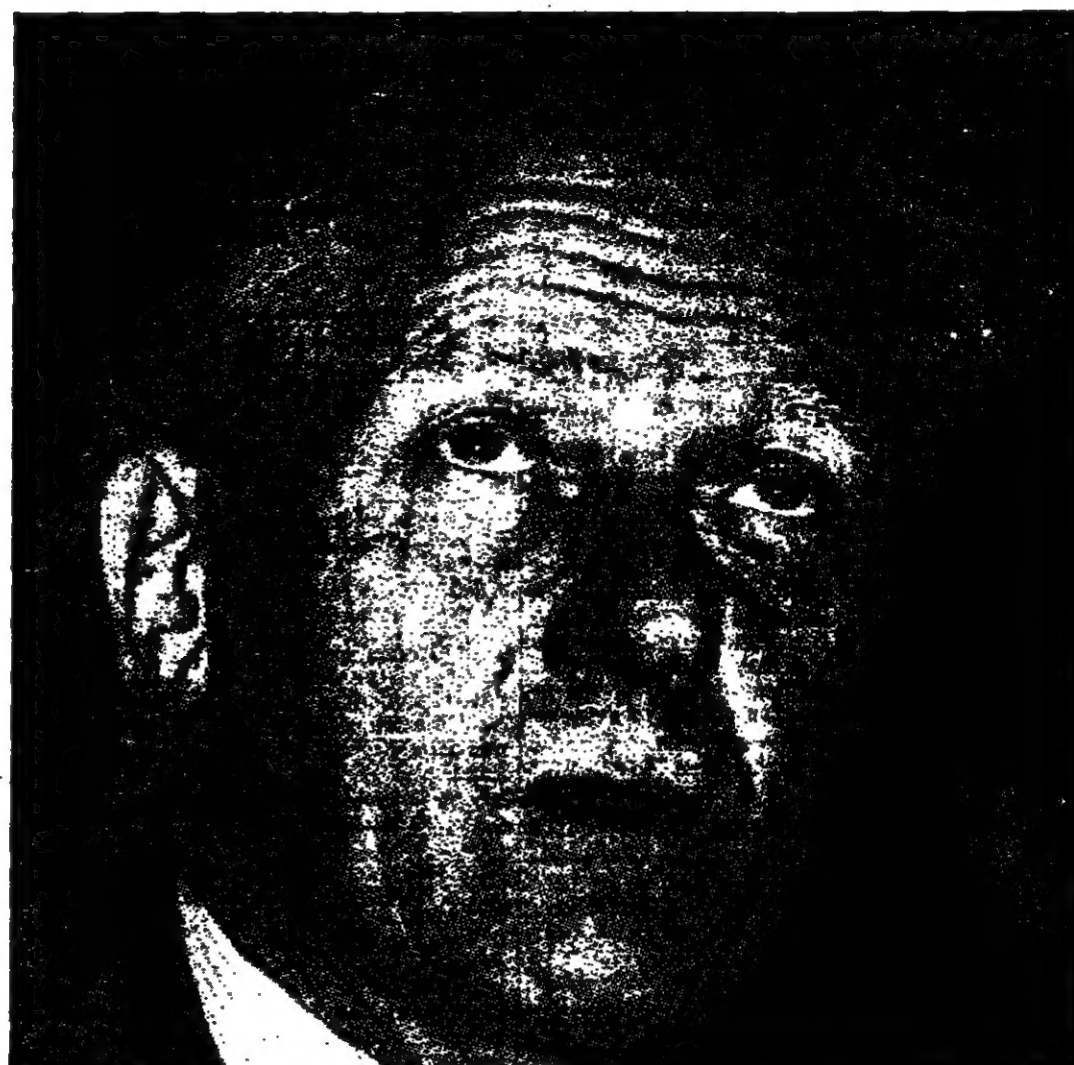
Ribble Valley was an intriguing as well as a spectacular result. Its most puzzling aspect is the unprecedented discrepancy between the Conservative candidate's respectable standing in the polls and his humiliation in the by-election. When the Conservatives lost Mid-Staffordshire and Eastbourne last year, they were trailing Labour by more than 10 points in the polls, and Mrs Thatcher's popularity was at low ebb. This time, they are 5 per cent ahead of Labour and John Major is one of the most popular prime ministers since 1945.

Ribble Valley undoubtedly registers as a significant earthquake on the Richter scale of by-elections. The 25 per cent swing from Conservative to Liberal Democrat comfortably outclasses Eastbourne (20 per cent), Ryedale (19 per cent) and Brecon (16 per cent). Not since the SDP gained Crosby in November 1981 has a centre party made such deep inroads into the Conservative vote. But then the SDP caravan was rolling at full speed, its candidate was well-known (Shirley Williams), and its swing was exaggerated because it began from a smaller general election base. In both Ryedale and Eastbourne, the Liberals were able to build on a traditional vote and local election successes. In Ribble Valley there were no such special factors.

But, claim the Conservatives, there was such a factor: the poll tax, in an area which has traditionally enjoyed low rates. The BBC/NOP exit poll reported that 85 per cent of all voters, including 72 per cent of the Conservative loyalists were "dissatisfied" with the government's handling of the poll tax; a mere 4 per cent of voters, and only 9 per cent of Conservatives, wanted to keep it. Probably no by-election has ever before turned as much on a single issue, and no government policy has been so universally disliked.

Yet this is not only a local factor. The national polls suggest the British electorate as a whole remains utterly unreconciled to the poll tax. When the bills fell on doormats in March 1990, Gallup found that opponents outnumbered supporters by 75 per cent to 21 per cent; last month, opponents outnumbered supporters by 73 per cent to 22 per cent.

Moreover, although the slump



Charged with change: Michael Heseltine must abolish, not repackage, the community charge

in the Conservative vote was exceptional (second only to Richmond of all by-elections since 1979), it was hardly a freak. The Tories have now lost four by-elections in succession, three of them in normally safe seats, of which Ribble Valley was the 14th safest of all. They would probably have lost Richmond and Epping Forest as well had the Liberal Democrats and "continuing SDP" not squabbled and split the centre vote. Even allowing for the increased vulnerability of governments in modern elections, this is

an unprecedented record of defeat.

Nonetheless, by-elections say less and less about the parties' national standing. Aided by constituency polls, an increasingly sophisticated electorate is turning by-elections into referendums or protest rallies on the burning issues of the day, rather than opportunities to register party loyalties. As voters told the exit pollsters, they will return Ribble Valley to the Conservatives at the general election, when they weigh up the parties' relative fitness.

In the meantime, Ribble Valley sent the government a number of messages. First, the hoped-for Gulf factor has been short-lived as the land offensive. As by-elections in the Falklands period showed, solidarity with the armed forces during hostilities is one thing, post-victory gratitude to the politicians quite another. Had the land offensive proved slower, the Conservatives might have won.

Secondly, a June election looks as though it would be foolhardy. No previous government has

recovered within three months from such an electoral slump in its own stronghold. This year's local elections will probably see a new remaining temptation. They include Scotland and London, where, in the light of last year's experience, the Conservatives might have performed relatively well. However, all the shire districts in which the whole council is elected together will be included, and in many of these the poll tax increases over the rates have been severe.

Moreover, the Conservatives will be defending the unexpectedly large number of seats the party won in 1987. Whatever the outcome of the poll tax review, Conservatives will find the local elections dispiriting.

The Ribble Valley result signifies loss for either opposition party. One puzzle is why the instrument of anti-government protest in Mid-Staffordshire was the Labour candidate, while the Liberal Democrat played this role in Ribble Valley. In each constituency both opposition parties fielded competent mainstream candidates, and in each case they were in equal contention for the role of principal challenger at the beginning of the campaign.

The answer cannot lie in local polls, because the early ones in Ribble Valley put Labour second. Perhaps the shift reflects Paddy Ashdown's greater prominence and stature as a result of the Gulf war and the final laying to rest of the lingering disarray in the centre. Ribble Valley represents a reversal to normal protest politics after the quirk of Mid-Staffordshire.

The Labour party can afford to shrug off the third-place squeeze on its vote. It should be much more concerned by Gallups report that despite pessimism about their personal economic prospects, voters still prefer the Conservatives to Labour by a wide margin as the better party for the economy.

The conflicting signals from Ribble Valley and the opinion polls suggest that on balance, voters are more likely to re-elect than replace the Conservatives, but only if the election is delayed and the poll tax is abolished. Not repackaged, revised or reduced, but killed.

The author is professor of government at Essex University.

...and moreover

MATTHEW PARRIS

"Please help the RSPCA to fight the needless transport of live animals." I sat staring at the advertisement in the underground as Waterloo flashed by. This was a plea it would seem churlish to dispute.

But what does "needless" mean? We had reached Kennington as I reflected that the society does not campaign for vegetarianism, so the world it strives for must be one where slaughterhouses are as close as practicable to the place where animals are raised. "As close as practicable." How close is that, I pondered as we pulled into the Oval? It depends (I concluded) on how localised a system of slaughterhouses we could arrange. Is there any practical limit — a unit so small that nothing more localised could be envisaged? By the time we got to Stockwell, logic had carried me to the only possible conclusion to the RSPCA's argument.

The poster was advising us to eat our own pets.

At first I found that hard to live with. Turning the RSPCA's recommendation over in my mind, I looked for objections, trying to reason them through. None could be sustained. After all, what was I saying — but, rather than eat your own pet, it is better to eat somebody else's? Do we maintain that farm-raised animals are nobody's pets, inferring that an animal which nobody loves has less right to live than one which a human has chosen to cherish? No. We are not gods. Our affections cannot

be the criteria. At Clapham North I concluded that the RSPCA was right and we ought to eat our pets. I alighted at Clapham Common to consider the practicalities over lunch.

The theory is challenging, but the application surprisingly straightforward. Dogs are apparently delicious. Paul Levy, an *Observer* food critic, tried dog in China and has described the experience approvingly in his book *Out to Lunch*. Eating dogs would lead to heightened interest in the breeds which yield the best cuts — "table dogs" — and whippets would decline. The criterion of edibility is at least as fair as whether their ears stand up. Crufts could add a "culinary" category, though if your dog lost, there would be no going back.

Rabbits we already eat. Guinea-pigs as dishes (scrumptious!) I have described in an earlier column. A brace of hamsters is an idea as mouth-watering as half a dozen fresh perils with a twist of lemon. I know someone who once had Kentucky Fried Mouse, by mistake, while "edible dormice" (which you need an agriculture ministry licence to trap) have been the subject of questions in Parliament. The Italians already eat songbirds. Tropical fish come into this category, too, and what about a bowl of goldfish lightly tossed in sesame oil over a hot griddle?

Cats present a problem. I understand that they are best carried, and often are. Or they

can be presented in a sage and garlic sauce, on a bed of fluffy white rice. The whiskers should always be removed.

Nevertheless, only how to eat the pets we keep; but also how to keep as pets the animals we eat. Some people I know keep a pet sheep. She has her own place on the sofa, responds to commands, and (by comparison with cats or babies) her little droppings are a joy to clear up. In St John's Wood last week I saw a woman in high heels taking her pot-bellied pig for a walk. In Albanian (where I went last autumn) they keep goats on the first floor balconies of their flats. Pheasants are already pets, and we only pretend they are wild to give the upper classes an illusion of adventure in their boring lives. Nor do I see the hen as inherently less appropriate to the dining room than the Rotweiler. Anyone who can keep an Irish wolfhound in a maisonette could surely put up with a small cow in the bedroom?

One of the RSPCA's immediate concerns is the transport of British horses to France, to be eaten. Sadly, it is a truth of economics, but if there is a hungry Frenchman in one place and a redundant horse in another, no law on earth will prevent their converging. So can we not go with the grain of the market? Can we not eat our own horses, and invite the foreigners here? "The transport of live Frenchmen." Now who could object to that?

Out of office politics

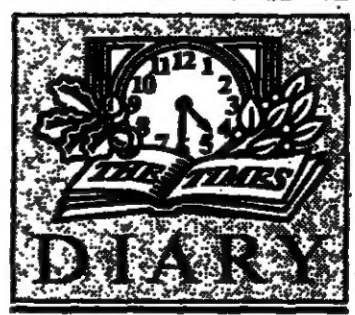
Even before the streets of Clitheroe resounded to Liberal Democrat cheers at Mike Carr's by-election triumph, Paddy Ashdown's MPs were engaged in an unseemly squabble about which Westminster office the victor of Ribble Valley should squeeze into.

No one wants to give up precious space. Offices are allocated after a general election, and winners of by-elections make their own arrangements with party colleagues. The only Lib Dem MPs with room to spare are Ashdown, Sir David Steel and Alan Beth. None so far has offered a desk.

The rumour threatens to reopen old wounds with Dr David Owen's SDP. Much to the disgust of Ashdown's troops, the Owenites still cling to a palatial suite of offices, granted after the last election when the SDP was still regarded as a serious political party.

The Tories, in spite of losing four by-elections in a row, refuse to give up any of their offices. However, with no love lost between Ashdown and Owen, there is little prospect of an SDP offer. Owen has a big office all to himself, and in stark contrast to most other MPs, Rosie Barnes and John Cartwright also have their own rooms. "We may have to move out of our Whip's office in the Commons to another building, but we will certainly not be giving it to the Liberal Democrats. If we give the office to anyone, it would be the Scottish Nationalists, not Mike Carr," an SDP source says.

Carr is also without personal transport. On the night of his triumph a disgruntled voter sealed the locks of his yellow Bedford van with strong glue.



● The result of the Ribble Valley by-election is not the only factor that may prompt John Major to rule out a general election in June. Could the cricket-loving prime minister really bring himself to declare polling day on Thursday, June 6, the start of the first test match against the West Indies? Thursday, June 20 is hardly better, being the first day of the second test. That leaves only June 27, in a peak holiday week, or June 13.

Written off

The Society of Authors has taken up the case of an unemployed writer who has been told she must put down her pen — even though her work goes unrecognised and unpublished — or lose her right to social security payments. The society has described the case of Joy Peach as "utterly doty", and says Tony Newton, the social security secretary, to intervene.

Peach, aged 57, has been told by a DSS tribunal that she is not entitled to income support because writing is regarded as remunerative work, even though she is not earning from it. She has even offered to confine her writing to evenings and weekends, but the authority is adamant she is ineligible. "If I were to stay in bed all day or slump in front of the telly, the state would support me. But if I persist in putting my time to

good use, I could starve to death," she says. Last May, she applied for support after a £40 a week Enterprise Scheme grant expired. She lives from a bank overdraft and an occasional £10 from her mother's pension.

David St John Thomas, publisher of *Writers News*, which will campaign for Peach, says: "It is as nonsensical as saying you have to give up knitting, cooking or growing vegetables in order to qualify for social security." Arnold Wesker, the playwright, has more practical advice. "Until this idiotic rule is changed, Miss Peach should be pragmatic and lie."

Semiotics

Oxford dons are being driven to distraction by the inadequate road signs to the city of dreaming spires on the M40 from London to Birmingham. With academic precision, Angela Huth, the novelist whose husband is a don, calculates that after the first sign indicating that Oxford is straight ahead, motorists have a mere 14 seconds before a sign indicates the turn-off.

"If you are travelling at 70 mph in the middle lane, you have not got time to get across and off the motorway," says Huth. "One goes sailing on to Blenheim."

Luminaries such as Sir Claus

Moore, warden of Wadham College, and Candia McWilliam the novelist, have all overshoot the filter lane and been sent to Blenheim. "We've twice missed the sign," says Huth. "I want to know what the transport ministry plans to do about it."

Historic reward

Eric Anderson, the headmaster of Eton, has repaid a 500-year-old debt by allowing TV cameras into the school for the first time in 25 years. After months of negotiations Simon Shore, the director, was granted permission to shoot *The City of 91*, a Channel 4 documentary to be screened on Monday. An important factor was a debt owed to Jane Shore, his ancestor and a mistress of Edward IV.

"After Henry VI was deposed and Edward became king, he wanted to close down all the institutions founded by Henry, including Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge," says Shore. "But Jane used her influence to persuade him not to. I reminded Dr Anderson that he owed a lot to my family." With due respect for history, Anderson let in the cameras.

● Following the example of recession-hit restaurants offering cut price food and drink to boost custom, Diane Clelland, the actress and co-owner of *Amuse's* in Cleveland Street, London W1, has come up with a novel scheme that offers diners clairvoyant readings. Starting next month, says actress Michael Colmer will provide personal charts for customers who sit at the restaurant. "Colles who telephone for a booking will be asked for the time, date and place of their birth," says Clelland. "After the pudding Michael will provide individual charts and give a clairvoyant demonstration." Perhaps he can advise on when the recession will end.



NO VALE OF TEARS

The result of the Ribblesdale by-election means next to nothing. By-elections are displays of electoral infidelity and promiscuity. They are among the vacuities of political theatre, on a par with resignation honours lists and party political broadcasts. Certainly the Tories "might have expected" to hold such a normally safe seat, but such expectations at by-elections are foolish. As often before — most recently at Mid-Staffordshire last March and Eastbourne last October — loyal voters decided, for a multiplicity of reasons, to give the Tory government a rap over the knuckles. Protest votes at by-elections have become a ritual, a fidget of rebellion, between the grim general engagements every four or five years.

Ever since Orpington in 1962, when psephologists first detected the concept of the "third party squeeze", by-elections have indicated a dissatisfaction with sitting governments, usually to the benefit of whichever party stands most chance of unseating the favourite. Such floating votes normally return home at general elections, though where a centre party candidate is the victor, the eccentricity sometimes lasts for a couple of elections more. Most centre-party seats, especially those outside the Celtic fringes, were acquired in by-elections, usually from the Conservatives.

The size of the protest is an amalgam of factors barely if at all related to the national poll-shares of any of the parties concerned. The reason is simple: voters are not involved in selecting a government or a prime minister. By-election results litter the electoral graph like random shot, falling well away from opinion poll or election trend lines. They can depend on the character of the candidates, a burning local issue, the identity of a "squeezable" third party (in this case Labour) and the movement of local opinion polls.

Any or all of these can distort the final result sufficiently to nullify all national trends. There will be much talk of "what

Ribblesdale tell us about the timing of a general election". The answer is nothing, unless Tory managers panic. A coherent message about election timing must await further opinion polls and May's local elections. Anybody attaching significance to by-election results during Margaret Thatcher's period in office would have concluded that she could never win a general election.

The most that can be said for by-elections is that they indicate the second preferences of supporters of the governing party. Where they are Tories, this usually means a swing to Liberal, though in Mid-Staffordshire the Liberal was squeezed and Labour won. The Liberal gloom then was as unjustified as its elation today. In Ribblesdale, the Liberal Democrats had come second at the last two general elections and the squeeze was on Labour. Certainly "no Tory seat is now safe", but then no government seat is safe at a by-election. This matters in a hung parliament, but not now.

John Major might indeed have hoped for a resounding endorsement of his leadership, of his counter-inflationary policy. He might have hoped that voters would, by now, have grown used to the poll tax, as Kenneth Baker had promised they would when he was party chairman. Instead he has merely been told that government is a hard old slog and that even loyal Tories can sometimes be fickle.

Ribblesdale is also being regarded as the valley of death of the poll tax. If it really takes a by-election to convince the cabinet and parliamentary Conservative party to correct this terrible mistake, then Ribblesdale will indeed deserve a place in history, the more so if it persuades Mr Major to reject the "pain-free" options flitting round the cabinet table, take the short cut to sanity and reinstate the rates. But by-election upsets occurred before the poll tax was born and will continue after its death. Sensible politicians will not be moved by this minor turbulence in the soft vale of Ribblesdale.

EUROPE'S BOAT PEOPLE

The Italian government's decision to prevent further Albanian refugees landing will dismay many who have watched the arrival at Brindisi of their ships, some almost apologetic, full of hungry and desperate "lives for freedom". The squalor and disillusionment which has followed recalls the Israelites' despair in the wilderness: "Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt..."

Throwing themselves on the mercy of their Italian cousins, these people risk their lives for freedom. They deserve better than to be forced to return to Europe's most despicable regime.

There must be sympathy, all the same, for the Italians struggling with the influx. This epitome to the history of European communism is not of their making. The government of President Ramiz Alia is tottering, making ever-less-believable promises while resorting increasingly to force. Hence the flight from Durres, Albania's main port. This is not just a local Italian problem, but one for the entire European Community.

Britain and Italy's other partners should offer cash, supplies and medical help while individual applications for political asylum are considered. Under the 1951 United Nations convention on refugees, Rome is obliged to treat these people, most of whom are alleged to be economic migrants, as political refugees until each case has been examined on its merits. It has acknowledged this obligation, but only for those who have already arrived. Rome should accept yesterday's offer of help from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and heed its appeal to honour the convention.

Those, probably the majority, who are not political refugees in the strict sense required by law would doubtless be happy to disperse far and wide. Most Italians would probably prefer them not to establish themselves in "temporary" camps around Brindisi, since

these are likely to become permanent; the likelihood of this seems to have prompted Rome's decision. There are, however, cogent tactical reasons for keeping most of the refugees, political and economic, near enough to the Albanian coast to influence events in the interior. Their very presence in camps would be a standing indictment of Mr Alia's regime. Whether or not that regime fails to achieve the rigged election result on March 31 which many Albanians fear, its collapse cannot long be delayed if the exodus continues. The emigration is a spasm in the death-agony. Its treatment by the Community as a special case is therefore warranted.

Generosity towards economic migrants, even fellow Europeans, cannot be extended indefinitely. Emigration will continue even long after communism's overthrow, because Albania is by far the poorest country in Europe. Albania's neighbours — Italy, Greece and Yugoslavia — will not tolerate permanent large-scale immigration. But they should accept it temporarily, in the knowledge that the replacement of Mr Alia's government is in their interests too.

For the present, conscience and realism are not at odds. Both dictate that Rome should not only accept the refugees, but, backed by the EC council of ministers, should use their presence as a lever to press Tirana to introduce democracy. "Interference in domestic affairs" is not a valid objection if Italy has tens of thousands of Albanians in its care and many more threatening to come.

Six centuries ago Durazzo was a thriving Venetian outpost. Today the same port, Durres, is under martial law. Italy ought not to wash its hands of a nation with which it has so much in common. Giulio Andreotti, the Italian prime minister, has a rare opportunity to help Albania. But repatriating these refugees against their will would leave a deep scar on his distinguished record.

CROWNING GLORY

The fun the French would have with "Bedroom-tax Riots in London" should be enough to persuade Michael Heseltine that he has backed another loser. His latest alternative to the poll tax is a property tax based on the number of bedrooms in each dwelling. He should have realised that the nation would simply cram itself into one room, install electric train-sets in all the others, and abandon its *vie amoureuse*. And a tax on model railways, no doubt the idea he has in reserve to meet such objections, would need parallel registers and a complicated rebate scheme which would not justify the cost of collection. How many niches of toy platform equal one branch-line signalbox? This is absurd.

He should try a completely different approach. He should order his civil servants to stop inventing wild notions. Neither a lavatory-seat tax nor a suitcase-in-the-loft tax nor a hereticaceous-border tax is going to save the party at the next election. What is wrong with the poll tax is not its name: otherwise the device of calling it the community charge would have done the trick. The real objection is that it is so boring. Why not keep the name, but make the tax more exotic?

The poll-tax deviser was in too much hurry. When he went to the dictionary he fastened on the first entry. "The human head", he saw: and all the government's miseries, flowing up to and beyond the Ribblesdale valley, spring from that dull choice. But read on down the definitions, Mr Heseltine: perhaps there lies life after death for the poll-tax. "The blunt end of the head of a miner's pick" is a poll, and might be

taxable at a pinch. Not many in safe Tory seats would have to pay it, and the inevitable row with Arthur Scargill could fill the polls (plural noun, estimates of public opinion, taxable if all else fails) upwards.

Public opinion might not think fair a tax only on those called Mary, who are sometimes known as Polly. But so are parrots. A tax on parrots, with rebates for budgerigars for being mere parakeets? Or might local government be financed by a multiple poll-tax on mediocre Cambridge graduates — also called polls? Or if this be thought too narrow a base, why not tax the pate of the human head from which the hair grows, yet another meaning of poll?

That could give Mr Heseltine's famous poll an ache. Logic would dictate that the tax ought not to apply to those on whom hair refuses to grow at all. If they are excluded, however, extra might have to be extorted from those whose growth of hair is particularly copious. Apart from environmental secretaries, such fecundity of growth is greatest among younger voters, who have already shown their willingness to take to the streets in poll-tax protests.

Perhaps the dictionary will not save Mr Heseltine in time. A history book might do instead. The last window-tax legislation expired only in 1851. A law is therefore already drafted. The Heseltine working party should reconvene at once to see what minor adaptations are needed — double tax for double-glazing? — before the solution is leaked. And the government would have saved itself from the otherwise inevitable going back to the rates.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

End of Gulf conflict: the case for ringing the bells

From the Reverend Anthony Maggs

Sir, Next month, it seems, we are to have a victory parade and a service of thanksgiving. That will be followed by the Arms Fair (May 14-16) to be held in Birmingham. So unless we act now we shall be back in the old cycle of arms build-up leading to war. Now is the time for the triumphant allies to set binding limits to the kind of arms traffic we have seen and implicitly supported.

If we can persuade 27 nations to sign UN resolutions to evict an aggressor, we can surely galvanise enough support for a resolution ensuring that future aggressors are prevented from obtaining arms on the scale we have seen in Iraq.

Yours sincerely,
ANTHONY MAGGS,
Austin Canon,
12 Womersley Road, N8,
March 6.

From the Reverend Lord Wrenbury
Sir, To err is human, but to be continuously wrong is perverse and some might even say obscene. The Bishop of Durham, so pleasant to meet in a private capacity, continues to sow tares in public (report, March 4). One presumes that like everyone else he prayed for the victory of the allied forces and for the safe return of our servicemen. How then can he possibly object to public thanksgiving when that prayer is answered?

Does the bishop seek to rewrite the Scriptures so as to excise the songs of Moses and of Miriam (Exodus 15) and the song of Deborah (Judges 5). Does he consider the Exodus, with the consequent destruction of the Egyptian army in the Red Sea, a matter for repentance? Would he have espoused the cause of the Canaanites over Israel?

What is triumphant in the pejorative sense about celebrating the victory of good over evil? It is not to ourselves but to God that praise is to be given, and who shall put on a sad face when he grants his merciful deliverance?

Let the bishop repent. Let the rest

of us greet our returning heroes with tabrets, with joy and with instruments of music.

Yours faithfully,
WRENBURY,
Oldcastle, Dellington,
Nr Heathfield, Sussex,
March 5.

From the Reverend J. R. Lowerson
Sir, The arguments over a national parade and thanksgiving service after the Gulf war are in danger of creating an artificial and harmful polarisation. In the past it was very common to give thanks to God for a victory and to express contrition for the shedding of blood.

This was often done in tangible form, such as when William the Conqueror built Battle Abbey after his success in 1066. There was no sense of hypocrisy in this but rather a recognition of the paradoxes involved. It is unfortunate that so many are assuming that we cannot continue to do this.

Yours faithfully,
J. R. LOWERSON,
9 Bradford Road,
Leaves, East Sussex,
March 5.

From Mrs Tamara Stokes
Sir, Has Mr John Gummer (March 6) never attended a Commonwealth Day Observance at Westminster Abbey? If he had, he would surely know how hearteningly at one the different faiths are and how impressive a joint service can be. Next Monday in Commonwealth Day, Surely the Chapter Office could find him a seat?

Yours faithfully,
TAMARA STOKES,
25 Tuford Court,
Westminster, SW1,
March 7.

From Prebendary John C. de la T. Davies
Sir, Mr Adrian Fort's letter of March 6 ("General de la Billière's call for the ringing of bells will, I fear, fall upon deaf ears.") is surely out of touch with the real world.

Remembering the servicemen who will not grow old

From Mrs V. Asquith

Sir, I was shocked and deeply disturbed to learn that Fusilier Conrad Cole, one of the nine young British soldiers who were killed by Allied fire in the last few days of the Gulf war, was only 17 years old; and his parents' only child (report, February 28).

Why is a boy of 17 sent to fight in war? And perhaps also in future, the Forces should discriminate and not send "only" children to war.

Yours faithfully,
VIVIAN ASQUITH,
44 Glyn Avenue,
East Sheen, SW14,
March 3.

From Mr E. Halton
Sir, What was a boy of 17 doing in the Gulf expeditionary force? In 1939 Leslie Hore-Belisha, then Secretary of State for War, decreed that no one under 19 would go overseas with the BEF and I remember having to leave one of my section behind in Aldershot when we went to France. The same age limit applied in the 1914-18 war.

It was always thought that the Gulf war would be a short one, yet

we find that the initial contingents included boys of 17.

Yours faithfully,
E. HALTON,
Beaumont, Chorleywood Road,
Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire,
March 2.

From Mr Raymond Blackburn
Sir, In Korea, Atlee ordered that no one under the age of 19 years should go into battle.

Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND BLACKBURN,
50 Homestead Road, Chiswick, W4,
March 3.

From Mr B. M. Lahee
Sir, Apropos of Susan Elkoot's article ("The families that fight together", February 27), when, in the early months of the First World War, my father and all his eight brothers were serving overseas, my grandmother wrote to the War Office (I still have a copy of her letter) asking if one of them could be brought back to this country. So far as I know the choice was left to the authorities. In the event it was my father who was taken out of the trenches and brought back to serve the rest of the war in this country.

Lessons of war and the challenges of a lasting peace

From Mr Colin Lancaster

Sir, Given the sense of disgust at the biblical destruction of Kuwait it is not surprising to hear the cries for punitive reparations against Iraq (e.g., Mr Hart's letter, March 4). These should be resisted.

The Iraqi people do not live in a democracy. They have no say in the political or moral complexion of their leaders. Succeeding generations of Iraqis should not be expected to suffer for Saddam's crimes.

Yours faithfully,
C. LANCASTER,
Milestones, 2 Rupert Road,
Ilkley, West Yorkshire,
March 4.

From Mr Hugh Hanning
Sir, If there were, as there should be, a blinding clarity of the obvious (plural noun, estimates of public opinion), it would be working on ways to relate the surplus logistic capacity in Saudi Arabia to the deficit logistic capacity confronting the voluntary agencies in the African famine, just across the Red Sea.

It cost so much to move the trucks and other thin-skinned vehicles to the Gulf that experts are seriously doubting whether it is worth a second bill to bring them back again. Bedford trucks are natural workhorses for relief operations and Riyadh is less than 700 miles from Port Sudan.

I understand from military planners that, while most of the Royal Corps of Transport drivers will want to get home, on past experience 10 per cent, some 400, would probably volunteer for this work if a policy decision was taken. For good measure, REME repair units would accompany them.

The other half of the transport problem, according to the voluntary agencies, is getting the food from Europe to the Red Sea. Here BCO/ops would recommend using some of the shipping heading for the Gulf — past Port Sudan — to collect the rest of the equipment there.

There is going to be a lot of spare capacity. Treasury "full costs" should be waived, as per the rules where matters of life and death are concerned.

The feasibility of this proposal is confirmed by your remarkable re-

port from Washington today ("Army battles flood of surplus supplies").

Yours etc.,
HUGH HANNING (Chairman,
Fontenell Group on Disaster Relief),
18 Montpelier Row, SE3,
March 4.

From Mr N. R. MacNicol
Sir, After the performance in the Gulf war by the Challenger I tank, ministers are expected to make early moves over the question of whether it should be replaced by Challenger II or by the Abrams M1A1 (report, March 4). The outcome must now be clear.

Our tank factories should now be converted to produce the Apache helicopters or a European equivalent. As the Polish cavalry had their horses shot from under them, now the Iraqi tanks have gone the same way. Let the cavalry take to the skies.

Yours faithfully,
N. R. MACNICOL,
9 Church Lane, Greatham,
Oakham, Rutland,
March 4.

From Mr J. W. Saunders
Sir, Martin Jacques's list (March 6) of the "political agenda of the nineties" has a depressingly old-fashioned ring. I quote: "social justice, a new collectivism, a new international order, and the problem of an overbearing (sic) American military power". Unless Labour is weaned into objective reality it cannot prosper.

The United States leadership has transformed the whole scene. Its diplomacy at the United Nations and military might on the Gulf battlefield are totally unlike the picture painted by invertebrate anti-Americans. The determination to get troops home, their job done, the sudden peace depriving critics of any charge of overkill, the firm support for the United Nations, these are breathtaking policies of the nineties.

We are in the age of the quiet thinking men: Bush, Gorbachev, Major. Any international order is dependent now on the continued success of the US and its allies.

Yours respectfully,
J. W. SAUNDERS,
17 Benton Road,
Middlesbrough, Cleveland,
March 6.

When General de la Billière spoke on February 28 I had already arranged that our bells should be rung that evening, that the celebration should include the firing of the bells 20 times to salute the general and his forces, and that there should be a large notice in the village centre to say what we would be doing. A crowd of ringers, including, of course, myself, all took part.

"Firing the bells" means causing them all to speak simultaneously, best done an even number of times. It causes an arresting sound, rough, tough, and sonorous; appropriate to thank God for our part in arresting the Iraqi evil.

As part of our future national celebration could we arrange for all our church bells simultaneously to do the same? If, say, the bells of St Paul's took the leading part, with their ringers shown on television for the firing and a little before it, we could have TV sets in all our church towers, and the conductor in St Paul's would be conducting all the bellringers of Britain. Then our people watching and listening on TV would hear their own church bells firing in synchrony with St Paul's on TV. It would be a marvellous act uniting the whole country in glorious thanksgiving to God.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN C. de la T. DAVIES,
Peterchurch Rectory, Hereford,
March 6.

From Sir John Herbecq
Sir, Mr Adrian Fort makes the common mistake of confusing "the synod chamber" with the spirit of the modern Church of England. A quarter peal was rung on the bells of Holy Trinity, Cuckfield, on Sunday last in thanksgiving for victory over the aggressor, and at the morning service there were no rows of empty pews but a church full of thankful worshippers.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HERBECQ,
Maryland, Ledgers Meadow,
Cuckfield, West Sussex,
March 6.

Three of my uncles were killed and one was permanently disabled. I have always been conscious how much more than most people my sister and I seemed to owe our lives just to chance.

Yours faithfully,
B. M. LAHEE,
11 Penlands Way,
Seymour, West Sussex,
March 5.

From Mr Fred Wright
Sir, In mid-January, at the time that your Gulf war polls were showing a consistent 86 per cent in favour of it, an interesting paradox surfaced from an *Evening Standard* poll. Of the 710 young people questioned, aged between 18 and 25, only 107 were in favour of the war.

But perhaps not so puzzling after all; for it can only mean that a very large majority of young people are not in favour of easily sending their own kind to war, while the older age groups are more inclined to favour wars that leave them no nearer to it than the television set.

Yours sincerely,
FRED WRIGHT,
103 Chaleis Estate,
Hammers Lane, NW7.

Art treasures that must be saved

From Lord Hamblin of Dalzell

Sir, A number of distinguished correspondents (March 5) have written to you about the tragedy which will take place if the Badminton Cabinet is allowed to leave the country.

Estate duty, under various guises, is now 80 years old. It is an equalising tax and, as time passes, attention is making it more and more effective. Large houses and their art collections are the adornments of rich men and are liabilities until they are sold. They cost a lot of money to maintain and insure. The estates that often go with them have tended to shrink over successive generations and are now less able to support both property and owner.

There are schemes which acknowledge this problem but they do not extend to personal shareholdings and non-heritage possessions. You could be worth millions of pounds and yet be a penniless, unpaid "museum curator". It cannot be surprising, if the government spends the capital of the country's citizens with the object of making them poorer, that the country itself becomes poorer and its collections go abroad. The flow is likely to become a flood.

Yours faithfully,
HAMILTON OF DALZELL,
Beitchworth House,
Beitchworth, Surrey,
March 5.

From Sir Hugh Leggatt
Sir, The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art has recently highlighted the "lamentable statistics" which document the breakdown of our control system. The plain fact is that only relatively cheap works stand any chance of being retained.

In 1989-90 five works were kept at an average cost of under £300,000, but 10 were lost at an average approaching £1.5 million: in other words, the value of those lost was 10 times the value of those retained. The case for a special government grant towards the £8.7 million required by March 17 to save the Badminton Cabinet — that unique and magnificent national treasure — is overwhelming.

Yours faithfully,
HUGH LEGGATT,
17 Duke Street, St James's, SW1,
March 5.

From Mr Raymond Gubbay
Sir, The President of the British Antique Dealers' Association (March 5) is proud of the fact that his association has raised £15,000 so far towards the Badminton Cabinet appeal. I calculate that to work out at about £30 per member, from an association which claims to represent the upper echelons of the antiques trade in this country.

Yours faithfully,
RAYMOND GUBBAY,
178a High Street,
Barnet, Hertfordshire.

Hospital slopping-out

From the Chairman of the Mental Health Act Commission

Sir, In his report on the Prison Disturbances April 1990 (details, February 26), Lord Justice Woolf regards the degrading process of slopping-out as the second most destructive feature of the prison system, after overcrowding. He recommends that all prisoners should be provided with integral sanitation, and that it should be provided not later than February 1996.

The Secretary of State for the Home Department, Mr Kenneth Baker, capped this move towards the eradication of a nauseous and uncivilised practice by announcing in Parliament the ending of slopping-out by December 1994.

May one ask the Secretary of State for Health if he would emulate his ministerial colleague by making a similar commitment in relation to the special hospitals? Currently about half the total population of 1,600 patients in Rampton, Broadmoor and Ashworth do not have proper sanitary provision.

Yours faithfully,
LOUIS BLOM-COOPER,
Chairman,
Mental Health Act Commission,
Maid Marian House,
56 Houndsditch, Nottingham.

The eyes have it

From Mrs Margaret Wiedemann

Sir, The social, moral and perhaps even political significance of spectacles (March 5) is that they are associated with earnestness. The term "bespectacled" may be used with mock-formality to imply misplaced earnestness, as in the case of Billy Bunter, the bespectacled Owl of the Remove, and his vain hopes of receiving a postal order.

Some years ago I used the word in this discriminatory sense and was accused, I think fairly, of being a "spectaclest".

Yours faithfully,
MARGARET WIEDEMANN,
18 Carrarvon Road, Redland,
Bristol, Avon.

From Mr Gershon Ellenbogen
Sir, When in practice at the criminal Bar, I recall that some of my colleagues, more prone to the peremptory challenge of jurors than I ever saw fit to be, regarded spectacles as indicative of intelligence and respectability, as much to be feared as the wearing of a tie or sober suit, or the carrying of a serious newspaper.

I am etc.,
G. ELLENBOGEN,
9 Montagu Square, W1.

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071 782 5046).



COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 8: Today The Duchess of York visited Falkenberg in Germany to meet the families of Servicemen presently serving in the Gulf.

Her Royal Highness met families of 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's) which The Duke of York is Colonel-in-Chief. Later The Duchess of York met families of other Regiments.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 8: The Prince Edward, Chairman of The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Special Projects Group, this evening attended a concert given by Mr Nigel Kennedy for the families of Service personnel serving in the Gulf in Dorset, Germany.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
March 8: The Princess Royal this afternoon attended a reception given by the Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit and the Employment Department at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Birmingham and was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for the West Midlands (the Earl of Aylesford).

KENSINGTON PALACE
March 8: The Princess of Wales

attended a lunch for the National Foster Care Association and the Thomas Coram Foundation for Children, at the Marriott Hotel, Grosvenor Square, London W1.

The Hon Mrs Vivian Baring and Squadron Leader David Barton, RAF, were in attendance.

KENSINGTON PALACE
March 8: The Duke of Gloucester, Colonel-in-Chief, Royal Pioneer Corps, today visited Bicester Garrison where His Royal Highness met families of 23 Group Royal Pioneer Corps who are presently serving in the Gulf and Staff of the Command Ordnance Depot.

The Duke of Gloucester was received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant for Oxfordshire (Sir Anthony Pousonby, Bt).

Major Nicholas Barne was in attendance.

YORK HOUSE
March 8: The Duke of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, was this morning present at Royal Air Force Base, Northolt, Oxfordshire, for The Reception of Those Who Gave Their Lives For Their Country in the Gulf. Captain the Hon Christopher Knollys was in attendance.

Prince Edward celebrates his birthday tomorrow.

Anniversaries

Today: BIRTHS: Amerigo Vespucci, explorer, Florence, 1451; Honoré Mirabeau, statesman, Bayonne, France, 1749; Joseph Franz Gall, anatomist, founder of phrenology, Tiefenbrunn, Austria, 1758; William Cobbett, essayist and politician, Farnham, Surrey, 1763; Tamas Shevchenko, poet, Ukraine, 1814; Ernest Rutherford, secretary 1945-51, Winton, Somerset, 1881; Victoria Sackville-West, novelist and biographer, Knole Castle, Kent, 1892; David Smith, sculptor, Decatur, Indiana, 1906; Stanislas Lothian, composer, West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1910.

DEATHS: David Rizzio, favourite of Mary Queen of Scots, murdered, Edinburgh, 1566; Jules Mazarin, cardinal, statesman, Vincennes, France, 1661; Arnold Toynbee, social philosopher, London, 1883; William I, German emperor 1871-88, Berlin, 1888; Frank Wedekind, dramatist, Munich, 1918.

More than 60 people were killed in storms over southern England, lasting until the 13th, 1891.

Tomorrow: BIRTHS: William Ety, painter, York, 1787; Tamara Karsavina, prima ballerina, Leningrad, 1885; Arthur Honegger, composer, Le Havre, 1892.

DEATHS: John Stuart Burt, 3rd Earl of Bute, prime minister 1762-63, London, 1792; Muzio Clementi, pianist and composer, Evanston, 1832; Tamas Shevchenko, poet, Ukraine, 1861; Giuseppe Mazzini, Italian patriot, Pisa, 1872; Sir Charles Thomson, naturalist, Bonnydoon, Louthian, 1882; Charles Frederick Worth, fashion designer, Paris, 1895; David Beatty, 1st Earl Beatty, admiral of the fleet, London, 1936; Mikhail Bulgakov, dramatist and novelist, Moscow, 1940; Jan Masaryk, statesman, Prague, 1948; Frank O'Connor, short story writer, Dublin, 1966; Konstantin Chernenko, general secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR 1984-85, Moscow, 1985. The Prince of Wales (Edward VIII) married Princess Alexandra of Denmark, 1863.

Birthdays

TODAY: Mr Bill Beaumont, rugby player, 39; Mr M.G. Brock, warden, St George's House, Windsor Castle, 71; M André Courtes, fashion designer, 68; Sir Rousaleyn Cumming-Bruce, former Lord Justice of Appeal, 79; Mr Bobby Fischer, chess player, 48; Mr John Golding, trades unionist, 60; Major-General J.P. Groom, former director-general, Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, 62; Professor Sir Donald Harrison, laryngologist and otologist, 66; Dr T.L. Johnston, former principal and vice-chancellor, Heriot-Watt University, 64; General Sir Frank King, 72; Sir Norman Lindop, former principal, British School of Osteopathy, 70; Mr R.G. Marjan, company chairman, 70; Sir Ronald Mervill, civil servant, 79; Mr Peter Quennell, writer, 86; Professor K.E. Robinson, former vice-chancellor, Hong Kong University, 77; Lord Thurlow, 79; Professor Sir David Weatherall, haematologist, 58.

TOMORROW: Sir Lawrence Avey, former chairman, Board

of Island Revenue, 65; Sir Robert Bellinger, former president, British Savings Committee, 81; Air Chief Marshal Sir Brian Burnett, 78; Mr Paul Cooden, chief constable, Kent, 44; Mr Fui Ts'ung, concert pianist, 57; Sir Richard Francis, director-general, British Council, 57; Sir Angus Fraser, former chairman, Board of Customs and Excise, 64; Dame Margaret Fry, chairman, National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations, 60; Rear-Admiral Sir John Gertler, 57; Sir Samuel Goldsmith, civil servant, 75; Sir Charles Groves, conductor, 76; Sir Charles Hardie, chartered accountant, 81; Lord Havers, 68; Mr Hugh Johnson, wine expert, 52; Lieutenant-General Sir John Leighton, 57; Mr Michael Montagu, former chairman, English Tourist Board, 59; Mr J.D.W. Odgers, former group managing director, British Telecommunications, 57; Sir Michael Straker, chairman, Northumbrian Water Authority, 63; Mr Peter Wormald, Registrar General for England and Wales, 55.

His sense of humour, coupled with an excellent memory, made him an entertaining raconteur and conversationalist. Visitors from many parts of the world enjoyed stimulating discussions, and were kept on their toes by his acuity, which was evident until the end of his life. His entreaties: "Tell me more, tell me more," revealed his zestful curiosity about all subjects, not least about people, and he enjoyed the refreshing candour of children.

His book on the medical services of railways in developing countries was widely used abroad. He was a founder member of The Royal College of General Practitioners, a liveryman of The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, a Freeman of the City of London, and a life member of The Royal Institution.

Educated in Bangalore and Rangoon, Rishworth obtained a scholarship from Calcutta university and in 1909 became an indentured pupil in the Indian medical department. During his training he was awarded two gold medals. Throughout the first world war he served in the Dardanelles, East Africa, Egypt and the Persian Gulf, and in 1918

OBITUARIES

HARRY CHANDLER

Harry Chandler, holiday tour pioneer, died on February 23 aged 77. He was born on April 20, 1913.

HARRY Chandler began taking people abroad in the 1930s on accompanied holidays, the precursor of the modern package tour. As a result he made his fortune. He went by train with his holiday-makers to the country they were touring, then pedalled by bicycle ahead of them to each place they were to visit to ensure all was well, and they followed by taxi. Chandler remained an innovator, and was chairman of the Tour Operators' Study Group, originators of the bonding scheme, which ensures that virtually every passenger carried out of Britain on package holidays will not lose his money if a company collapses.

Chandler began life as an office boy in the City of London and got the travel bug as a result of his firm being in the business of shipping freight. His first trip abroad was on one of his ships to Hamburg. When war broke out, Chandler, who went to the Grove School in Stratford East and night school, had to abandon the business he began in the 1930s. He served in the Royal Engineers, rising from the ranks to captain, and in military intelligence when the war ended and the reconstruction of West Germany began.

In austerity Britain in 1947, when a break at the seaside was the most the average holiday-maker aspired to, Chandler had a list of his former military colleagues and sent them a leaflet offering a 5-day, 10-guinea trip to Switzerland. The 500 holiday makers a year who went with Chandler soon grew to 30,000, and the secret of his appeal was that his business remained small enough to provide a personal



service. Unlike most travel firms, Chandler never advertised or used a travel agency. Instead he relied on personal recommendation and sent out brochures for his firm, The Travel Club, from his offices in Station Road, Upminster, and waited for the bookings to arrive. The firm, which he ran with his wife Rene, his long-standing business partner, is also small enough for him to have dealt with any trouble as soon as the first signs appeared, in the tradition of his pre-war enterprise; he liked to retain the hands-on feel of the business. Profits were good partly because the Chandlers did not have to pay out agents' commissions. The company has concentrated almost entirely on European destinations.

He was a founder member and, from 1969 to 1979, chairman of the Tour Operators' Study Group, then its life president, and could talk to retail agents in forthright terms others might shun for fear of losing goodwill, and more importantly, money. The study group represents 80 per cent of package holidays originating in the United Kingdom. Bonding emerged from a meeting of founder members in 1969. Chandler was the initiator and first president of the International Federation of Tour Operators, comprising tour company associations throughout Europe which take abroad some 40 million passengers a year.

Extrovert and enthusiastic about all to do with tourism, Chandler had the personality to break down barriers, and the secret of his success was his vision, right from the start, of giving the chance of travel to as many people as possible.

The tourism he encouraged led to his being honoured in Italy, Portugal, Spain and Austria where he was given the freedom of the town of Seefeld, one of his first post-war destinations. Loyalty was one of his most endearing traits. The company still uses the same hotel there because it gives value for money. He kept his 1969 Jensen car (number-plate HC1000), but his lifestyle changed even if he remained the old Harry Chandler at heart. With homes in Essex, Mayfair and the Algarve, much of the year was at one time spent travelling and he and his wife could hardly wait to use their 40 ft yacht moored at Burnham-on-Crouch. He enjoyed the fruits of his hard work. He said: "Money enables you to buy lobster in a restaurant. But I still resent what it costs." He is survived by his wife and son, Paul.

HENRY RISHWORTH

Henry Richard Rishworth, CBE, surgeon, died on February 14, aged 100. He was born in the military cantonment of Bangalore, India, on February 8, 1891.

DICK Rishworth, in addition to his skill as a surgeon, was a man of exceptional energy and organising ability. A streak of marked stubbornness enabled him invariably to accomplish what he sought, but his persuasive arguments were laced with endearing charm and humour.

His sense of humour, coupled with an excellent memory, made him an entertaining raconteur and conversationalist. Visitors from many parts of the world enjoyed stimulating discussions, and were kept on their toes by his acuity, which was evident until the end of his life. His entreaties: "Tell me more, tell me more," revealed his zestful curiosity about all subjects, not least about people, and he enjoyed the refreshing candour of children.

His book on the medical services of railways in developing countries was widely used abroad. He was a founder member of The Royal College of General Practitioners, a liveryman of The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, a Freeman of the City of London, and a life member of The Royal Institution.

Educated in Bangalore and Rangoon, Rishworth obtained a scholarship from Calcutta university and in 1909 became an indentured pupil in the Indian medical department. During his training he was awarded two gold medals. Throughout the first world war he served in the Dardanelles, East Africa, Egypt and the Persian Gulf, and in 1918

was given a commission in the Indian Medical Service. After a period in Sidi Bishr he was sent on special duty to Constantinople, evacuating Russian refugees and later the British from Ismid on the advance of Kemal Pascha in Asia Minor.

On demobilisation he entered Charing Cross hospital, London, and at the same time was acting divisional surgeon at Scotland Yard. He returned to India in 1923. For his services as district medical officer at Bhusawal, and especially for his work in establishing a small civil hospital, he was appointed OBE in 1925, later advanced to CBE for his public services in Bombay.

After the second world war Rishworth was asked by the Foreign Office to go to Baghdad as director of medical services, Iraq State Railways.

Subsequently, the Nigerian government requested him to report on the medical services of the Nigerian railways. He remained their medical adviser in London into his ninth decade.

Accustomed to a comfortable lifestyle overseas where he enjoyed prestige and honour, Rishworth nevertheless adapted with remarkable but characteristic facility to domesticity in his small London flat where he lived in retirement on his own until he was 96. At the age of 80, following the death of his wife, he enrolled for courses in sculpture, watercolour and oil painting and was prolific in his output.

He married Elizabeth Dawson Moray in 1918. They had two sons, the elder of whom was killed in the RAF in 1941. He is survived by his younger son.

Church services for tomorrow

Fourth Sunday in Lent

CATHEDRAL 9.15 AM. Communion. Canon 11.30 AM. Communion. Canon 1.30 PM. Communion. Canon 3.30 PM. Communion. Canon 5.30 PM. Communion. Canon 7.30 PM. Communion. Canon 9.30 PM. Communion. Canon 11.30 PM. Communion. Canon 1.30 AM. Communion. Canon 3.30 AM. Communion. Canon 5.30 AM. Communion. Canon 7.30 AM. Communion. Canon 9.30 AM. Communion. Canon 11.30 AM. Communion. Canon 1.30 PM. Communion. Canon 3.30 PM. Communion. Canon 5.30 PM. Communion. Canon 7.30 PM. Communion. Canon 9.30 PM. Communion. Canon 11.30 PM. Communion. Canon 1.30 AM. Communion. Canon 3.30 AM. Communion. Canon 5.30 AM. Communion. Canon 7.30 AM. Communion. Canon 9.30 AM. Communion. Canon 11.30 AM. Communion. Canon 1.30 PM. Communion. Canon 3.30 PM. Communion. Canon 5.30 PM. Communion. Canon 7.30 PM. Communion. Canon 9.30 PM. Communion. Canon 11.30 PM. Communion. Canon 1.30 AM. Communion. Canon 3.30 AM. Communion. Canon 5.30 AM. Communion. Canon 7.30 AM. Communion. Canon 9.30 AM. Communion. Canon 11.30 AM. Communion. 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Going to the art of the matter

'Forgers never anticipated that we might do this work'

● **UCL Painting Analysis, History of Art Department, London University, 43 Gordon Square, London WC1 (071-383 2090).**



True or false? Libby Sheldon puts an old painting to a modern test

Even when the daytime crowds of tourists have been ushered out of Westminster Abbey at dusk, the abbey is never completely dark inside. The light from candles and stained glass windows shines dimly up the aisles through the stained glass and glimmer on the pale ribs of the nave vault, the tallest in England. The rampant undergrowth of monumental stonary along the aisles is almost hidden in shadows, restoring the sense of space that the church must have had in the Middle Ages. The grumble of traffic seems far away.

Like any public building which has a busy daytime life, the abbey has an atmosphere after hours that makes visitors feel like cave-droppers, awed and intrigued to be catching it off guard.

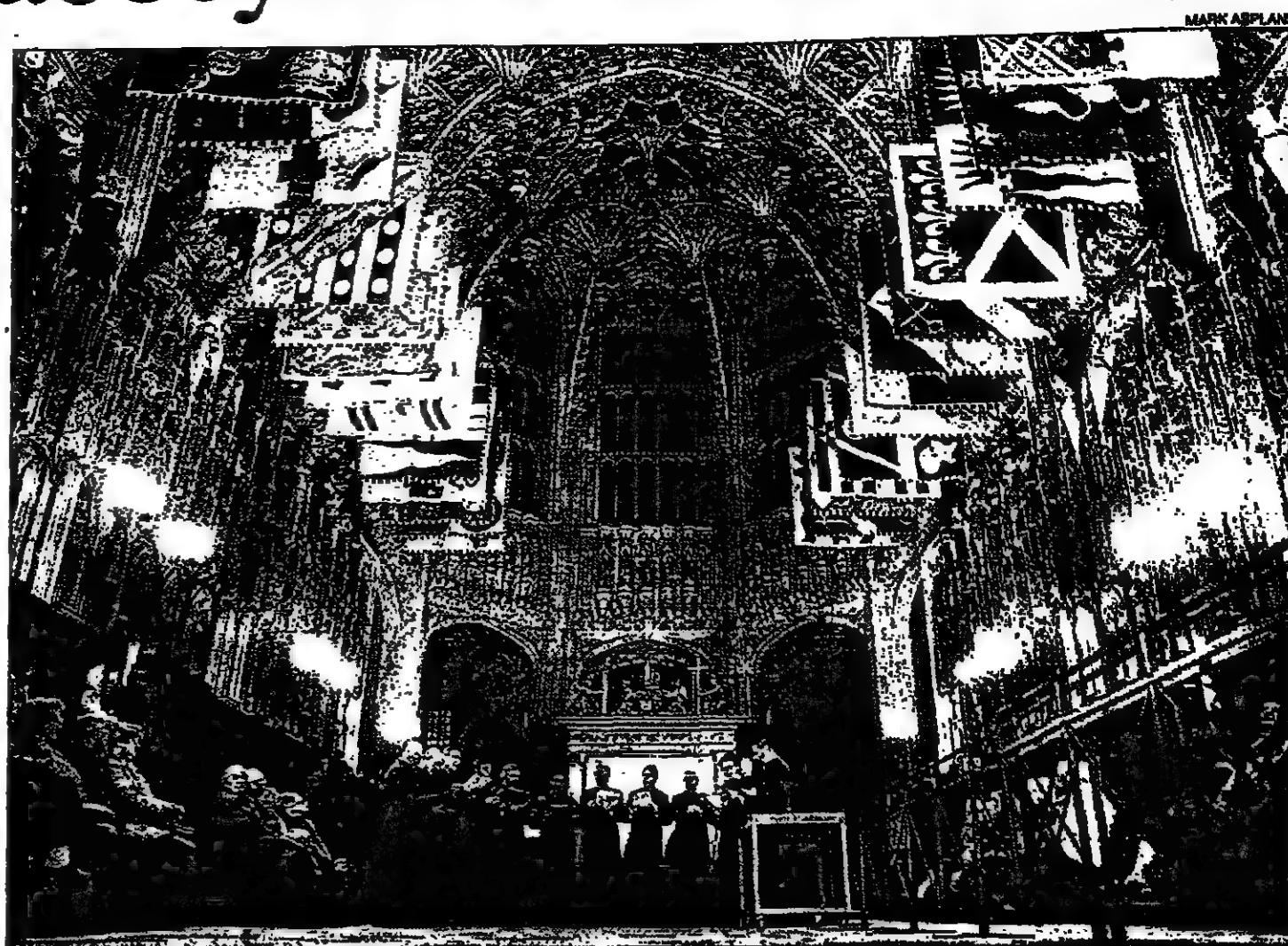
Ten or 12 times a year, a small party of visitors files into the abbey after its main doors are closed, ducking their heads under the low arch of a side doorway, to see the church and hear its music as it might have been heard before the place became an item on the mass tourist circuit. If the Purcell Club let more than a few people attend their choral recitals in the abbey, they would chase away the hushed solemnity which is part of the experience, and which is so often absent by daylight.

The club's members are former choirboys of the abbey, who live within reach of London and still enjoy singing church music. Between the anthems and motets, one of them gives a spoken commentary, describing the church and its treasures with zest, knowledge and affection. After the performance, the club provides tea and sausage rolls, to sustain the audience after their two-hour musical tour around the draughty aisles.

"We can cope with a maximum audience of 70 before numbers become too large for the more confined parts of the abbey, such as the Confessor's shrine and St Faith's chapel," says Bernard Baboulène, secretary of the club, who provides the spoken commentary for the tour. He sang in the abbey choir at the Queen's coronation, and also at her father's coronation in 1937.

The show is presented with a very English mixture of dedication and improvisation. The rigorous disciplines of choir-school tradition are combined with the amiable simplicities of an old-fashioned church hall fund-raising

abbey in close harmony



Song at twilight: Parcell Club choristers entertain evening tourists in the abbey, first with sacred music, later with "The Owl and the Pussycat"

event. The singers are not members of the abbey's professional choir. The programme of music is determined each evening just an hour before the performance, according to the balance of singers who happen to have turned up for the preliminary rehearsal.

Profits from the recitals are donated to charity, mainly to the abbey's music fund. Bookings are being taken well into 1996, and there is a tendency for parties of satisfied customers to come away from one performance and immediately join the back of the queue.

The performance begins almost in darkness, close to the tomb of the unknown warrior at the west end. The lights gradually brighten as the choir sings a solemn anthem such as *Beati quorum via*, by Sir Charles Stanford, who is buried in the abbey. Then Mr Baboulinec describes the earliest origins of the foundation, in Saxon times. Singers and audience move past the shrouded memorials of the famous and the forgotten into the gilded choir stalls, where the next day's service sheets are already laid out. Another piece is sung, perhaps *Ante luciferum genus*, by Jacob Handl, the 16th century Bohemian monk, and another stage of the abbe's

'Sausage rolls fill the table on which, at coronations, the crown jewels are laid out'

history is unparalleled. Then eastward by stages to the sanctuary, the cluster of royal tombs round the shrine of Edward the Confessor, and to Henry VII's fantasized chapel, hung with the gaudy banners of the Order of the Bath. Under Henry V's openwork chantry chapel, the choir sings the triumphant *De Gratias*, reputedly the last Abbey on Henry's return from the tomb of Agincourt. Chapel by chapel, the lights go out behind the party as they move back towards the west end, leaving the superb bronze effigies on the tombs of medieval kings and queens alone again in darkness and silence.

tombstone in the north aisle, the choir sings the anthem "Thou knowest, Lord, the secret of our hearts", which the composer wrote in 1694 for the funeral of Queen Mary II, and which was sung at his own burial.

The party meets for a less solemn last round of secular party songs, in the 14th century Jerusalem chamber in the dean's house. Splendidly paneled and hung with tapestries, it is the room where, in 1482, the younger son of Edward IV was taken from his mother before disappearing forever with his brother into the Tower of London, on the orders of the fumeur Richard III. It is the room where in 1413 the dying Henry IV reputedly recovered consciousness after a stroke, to see his son, Prince Hal, prematurely trying on the crown of England.

The crown jewels are still laid out there on the night before a coronation, on a long table where the Purcell Club now lays out its sandwiches, cakes and sausage rolls, to the strains of "The Owl and the Pussycat went to Sea".

● **Purcell Club booking:** David Walters, 13 Cockshott Road, Reigate, RH2 7HD. Parties of 30-70 only, £8 per person.

THIS WEEKEND

□ Spring antiques and collector fair: Thousands of items from the 18th century to the Sixties. *Great Hall, Alexandra Palace, London N22 (081-365 2121).* Tomorrow, 11.30am-5.30pm.

£2, accompanied child free.
☐ **Decorative Antiques and Textiles Fair:** Quality furnishings under a marquee.
Chelsea Harbour, Lots Road, London SW10. Today, 11am-5pm; Sat 11am-6pm. £2

NEXT WEEK
 ☐ London beer festival: British beer, English cider and perry. Live music.
Camden Centre, Bldburgh Street, London WC1. Wed-Thurs, noon-3pm, 5-10pm; Fri noon-10pm. Lunchtime free, evening £1.80

free, evening £1.80.
□ Mobil concert season:
 Bach's St John Passion sung in
 German with the choir of
 King's College, Cambridge.
Royal Naval College Chapel,
King William Walk,
London SE10. Wed 7.30pm;
£5.50-£9, concessions
£4.50-£8 (081-317 8687).

JUDY FROSHAUG

[illegible]

Home from home:
Lucy Makin and Jonathan Hills

Sing-songs in the bat house

Lucy Makin, an artist living in London, used to go down to Kent to help an elderly friend of the family with her garden; an old-fashioned garden full of roses and columbine, currant bushes and damson trees. The old woman used to rescue chickens from battery farms; they would arrive without feathers or beaks, but after a few months' convalescence in the garden they became like born-again chickens, fat and happy, with their feathers, and even beaks, regrown.

When, a couple of years ago, Ms Makin became engaged to a fellow artist, Jonathan Hills, she was delighted to be given the opportunity to look after the old house, which was becoming too much for its owner to manage. "Jonathan was fed up with London and getting really wistful," she says. "It couldn't have happened at a better time. He adores the place as much as I do. We even spent our honeymoon there."

The 400-year-old hall-style house in Kent is "remote and not at all picturesque," Mrs Hills says. "The area has a rough edge to it, and does not correspond with the London notion of 'country', which is a myth in any case, because it's not gentrified."

The views across the fields to the flat church are bleak, grass grows up the middle of the road, the huge roof, as deep as the house itself, is full of bats. "Which is just what we like about it," she adds.

The Hills have a house in Wandsworth, south London, "formal and purrtime-fine". Mr Hills is a studio in Kensington. Mr Hills is a figurative painter, a book illustrator and partner in a television special effects business in Soho, The Frame Store. He co-directed *Una Stravaganza del Medici*, a Channel 4 opera which won

the Prix Italia Special prize last year. Lucy Makin, as she continues to be known professionally, works to commission, specialising in antiquated canvases, "like weathered frescoes", which incorporate her own architectural drawings, old maps and has relief, and are either for wall hanging or wrapping around pieces of furniture or folding screens.

Watching someone paint, it appears idyllic and relaxed, but it's not. It's very hard work," Mrs Hills says. "We hate London; it's like a massive car park. It's so depressing and it's difficult to feel inspired there."

"Kent is where we make most of our preliminary studies - and full paintings, too, if we have time enough. Otherwise we take them back to London to finish them off."

Mr Hills says: "You need to get away from the distractions, from the place where you pay the bills and do the deals in order to paint. I like the scale of the landscape, the feel of the village - cosy under vast skies, and the fact that the pub is only 150 yards from the house."

In winter they light the big inglenook fire in the hall and make comforting food, such as dumplings and steamed puddings. "In the evening, if friends are staying, we have lovely sing-songs round the piano; old sentimental things like 'Early One Morning' and 'Danny Boy'. Our friends would be much too shy to do something like that in London." Mrs Hills has perfect pitch and an equal facility with the piano, cello and guitar.

In summer they take their easels into the garden, still bursting with aquilegia and roses, and for three weeks "fluorescent pink poppies". He mows and she weeds. Their friends get a crash course on the joy of horticulture. "I like seeing crusty, clever



Lucy Makin, Jonathan Hills, Jezzle, and the house that "creaks like a boat"

people doing a bit of manual labour and enjoying it." Mr Hills says. Like the other two houses in the village, their house is built of ship's timbers, hauled from Whitstable eight miles away, and with the shipwright's

'I like seeing crusty, clever people doing a bit of manual labour and enjoying it'

marks still clearly visible on the beams. "The house creaks and groans at night like an old boat on the water," Mrs Hills says. There are two large sitting rooms, three bedrooms and a tiny kitchen where Mrs Hills, with justifiable pride, cooks for 12 on two Baby Bellings. The floorboards are all old oak, "so there's

no anxiety about getting mud on the carpet". The Biedermeier sofa is covered in ancient fabric "which is falling apart, so there's no worry about that either". Heavy old curtains in red and gold damask hang on poles in all the rooms.

"We have tried to keep the house as it was," Mrs Hills says. "We use the same feather beds that have been here for the past hundred years."

The beds also find favour with Jezzle, their West Highland terrier. But her delight is the house mouse. "She will spend an entire weekend beside the wainscoting waiting for it to come out," Mrs Hills says.

Jezzle understands a thing or two about the logistics of a home from home: "When we're getting ready to leave she rushes off to bury her bone from lunch in the garden," Mrs Hills says. "The first thing she does when we come back is to dig it up. She knows she's coming back."

ELUNED PRICE

Farmer's diary: Paul Heiney

Mourning after the joy before

Some unsuspected scent in the air, or warmth in the wind, must have set an alarm bell ringing this week and galvanised me into a frenzy of farming activity.

In the spring, a farmer's fancy turns to thoughts of grass. To most town dwellers, grass has little romance about it, being merely a patch of annoying stuff which you have to mow. To farmers with livestock, however, a field of growing grass spells freedom, for when the grass is growing thick and fast, stock that has been confined all winter can be liberated to feast upon it and get fat. The season of bucket and bale carting will be over, the months of trudging through the mire of manure will be done, and the farmer will feel his holiday has begun.

The stock quite like it, too. So, with the warmth of the sun on my back for the first time this year, I harnessed Star and Blue, my Suffolk Poodles, and went to harrow the meadows. Harrows are the farming equivalent of the garden rake: they are spiky, heavy, and as the carthorses drag them over the sward they rip out the dead growth of the previous season so that light and moisture can get down to the roots.

To transport the harrows up the lane without putting the horses into cart harness, I have built a sledge: an old door fixed on two log runners. Onlookers wondered aloud whether I now regarded the wheel as too new-fangled. I ignored them and got on with the job.

When harrows break the blades of grass a heady scent rises, more intoxicating than the nose of a vintage wine. Tractor drivers would miss it, being enclosed in a cab and in front of the action, but as I plod behind my horses I am exposed to the full boozey waft of it.

I have learnt in my short farming career, however, that

it never pays to get drunk on success. Farms have ways of sobering their masters. When I returned to the stockyard with the horses, out of the corner of my eye I glimpsed a ewe and knew she was not long for this world. Shepherds say that "sheep have only one ambition in life, and that is to die", and here was the proof. This poor animal, heavy in lamb, was swooning on her feet, eyes glazed and staring, wait-



ing for death. There was no point in calling the vet. I offered her feed but she showed no interest, and when she lay down it was clear she would never get up. So I was left with a corpse.

I remembered a discreet advertisement that used to appear in our local newspaper: "All classes of fallen stock removed." The ad was placed by the local hunt, which took away dead animals, such as my ewe, butchered them, cooked them and fed them to the hounds. You may find this distasteful, but as a method of disposal it had a lot going for it. There was no risk of infected animals littering the

countryside, no danger of rotting corpses being buried near streams which provide drinking water; it also meant that valuable animals which could provide meat for humans were not being killed merely to feed dogs. The method was cheap, clean and relatively dignified. But no longer. I made a few calls and discovered that the dead hand of Brussels has pole-axed the animal disposal business. New rules, some unnecessarily tough, require hygiene standards far higher than most hunt kennels can afford or need; the same rules which are forcing small, and arguably more humane local abattoirs to disappear. However, where there's livestock there will be dead stock, and the disposal of "fallen" animals is becoming a big problem.

Dead stock were often processed for bone-meal and factories collected them, but fears about bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) have brought that to an end. Hides and fleeces used to have some value, but not now because of cheap imports.

The problem is getting desperate. There are reports of dead sheep and cows being dumped by Scottish roadsides, thus shifting the disposal problem from the farmer to the council. What can the hill farmers do? They often farm on soils only inches deep over rock. They cannot afford to have the carcasses carted away.

One dead ewe is no problem for us. I dug a grave in a disused corner of the farm, harnessed a horse and loaded the sheep on to my sledge. In a sombre procession the three of us made our way across the fields. The joy of a morning on the meadows was gone; one harrowing experience had made way for another.

Feather report

Tickers let the train take the eye-strain

I have already achieved the ambition of a lifetime this year. I saw avocets from a train window. I was travelling from Penzance to Exeter, and this run offers some of the best opportunities in Britain for the esoteric and beautiful pursuit of train-birding.

There are about 20 miles of sea, turning into the Exe estuary, and there are always plenty of birds about, particularly in winter. The best way to watch the Exe is to remain motionless over a telescope for hours at a time. Train-birding, done with the naked eye at 50mph or so, is a serious test of observation skills. Your chances of identifying anything smaller than a blackbird are minimal. Birds with bold or, better, boldly contrasting plumage are easiest: oystercatcher, greater black-backed gull.

Mainly, you are down to jizz - the art of identifying a bird while seeing it badly. When your viewing time is reduced to a few nanoseconds, you have no time for analysis. A shape, a vague idea of pattern, and the bird is gone. I have seen avocet on the Exe before, but only through a telescope while on foot. From the train, I saw a tight raft of 50 white shapes, floating on the surface, all taking to the air in sudden alarm; the calligraphic black pattern on their white backs as familiar to me as the coat of the cat that sits on my desk, for I spent much of last spring and summer in the company of avocets.

This, I thought, was something long desired, at last achieved: the ultimate train-tick. The fastidious may find something frivolous about all this. And since this column tends to curl its lip at the excesses of the twitters, I could be accused of inconsistency. But no matter: a train-tick is still a train-tick.

I remember being asked in a questionnaire how often I went birdwatching. Wrong thinking: no real birdier is ever wholly off-duty. Birding is one



Now we see it, now we don't: fleeting glimpse of a hen harrier

of the pleasures of being alive: an eye and an ear ever open to birds enhances all of life, not just the days you go on safari. Part of this is serious, not because my observations are of any use to science, but because awareness of wildlife seems to me an essential part of the way a sane person faces life. Seriousness does not rule out laughter, however, let alone joy.

Twitters are called the train-spotters of the birding world; well, train-birding takes that nonsense a stage further. One of the pleasures is that a train-tick can never be verified. A friend of mine claims a purple heron overflying a train between Sandy in Bedfordshire and King's Cross, but he knows he can never be 100 per cent certain.

Ah, but I'm 99 per cent certain of this one. I was travelling to Hereford races at the time, on the line from Newport, and I saw something that has, I fear, even replaced the avocet as top train-tick.

I saw it for less than half a second, but am morally certain of it: a vast, reddish-brown shape on ragged wings starting into the air beside the track, not ten yards from the train. A bird of prey, obviously. It had

the jizz of a harrier, and I have seen harriers all year at the Minster reserve in Suffolk. I saw, without any doubt, a white ring around the base of the tail: that gives you the hen harrier.

The white ring would not be enough to convince, let alone interest, the rarities committee, and, in theory, it could have been a still rarer bird: a rough-legged buzzard. But we train-tickers make our own rules, and I am happy with my hen harrier. I don't get a winner like that every time I go racing.

Train-birding is silly. It is also a deeply moral business, for birds are there to enjoy as well as to study and to save. But I don't think you can count a train-tick if you have pulled the communication cord.

SIMON BARNES

What's about: Birders - listen for woodpeckers: distinguish lesser-spotted from greater-spotted by quieter, more rapid and sustained drumming. Green woodpecker does not drum, but very audible laughing ("yaffling") call. Twitters - American wigeon in County Cork, snow goose and whistling swan in County Wexford. Details from Birdline 0898 700222.

Country events

- THIS WEEKEND
- Threatened species week: Gallery display with information on birds, mammals, reptiles and insects threatened with extinction. Craft activities for children.
 - Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, Arundle, West Sussex (0903 883355). Daily, 9.30am-5.30pm, last entry 4pm; £3, child £1.50.
 - Canal capers: Craftsmen demonstrate the art of painting canal boats.
 - Tunnel End Canal and Countryside Centre, Waters Road, Marsden, near Huddersfield. Tomorrow, 1-5pm; free.
 - Dolls and miniatures fair: stands with collectors' dolls and houses.
 - Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Cheshire. Today, tomorrow, 10am-4.30pm; free.
 - Walks: Today, Witton Gilbert and the

- Lanchester Valley Railway - a five-mile walk. Meet at car park near Winton Gilbert church, Co. Durham, ref. GR25456, 2pm. Tomorrow, Ringstone roundabout - a ten-mile hard walk. Meet at Wood Edge car park, Scammonden Dam, near Huddersfield, 10am.
- NEXT WEEK
- National Trust concert: Royal Exchange musicians: Beethoven, Dvorak and Mozart.
 - Dunham Massey, Altrincham, Cheshire. Fri, 8.15pm; £9 (bookable, 061-941 1025).
 - Beautiful homes and gardens exhibition: Displays at the 18th century orangery include garden furniture, landscape architecture, interior design, furniture, painting and ceramics.
 - Margam Park, Port Talbot, West Glamorgan (0639 881635). Fri-Sun, 10.30am-6pm; £2, accompanied child under 16 free.

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The Kitchen Sink unplugged

Two dealers are gambling on reviving interest in the Fifties' school of socialist realism. Sarah Jane Checkland reports

Of the two John Bratby paintings of lavatories, the more luxurious one, equipped with paper, has found a Hollywood-based buyer at £5,000. A portrait by Jack Smith of a putty-coloured child staggering in his first steps may not be for sale because its owner, Julian Hartnoll, the dealer, is considering selling it away while prices rise. This leaves a miscellany of bicycles, an abattoir, various skeletons, bullfrogs and flowers awaiting new owners, at prices from £2,000 to £40,000.

These are the works in the first exhibition for 30 years of the Kitchen Sink school of painting, an art movement which, boosted by the art critic John Berger's appreciation of its socialist realism, enjoyed a flush of fame in the mid Fifties, only to be washed down the pipes, and into the Tate Gallery's cellars, with the arrival of American abstract expressionism.

Now two London dealers have gathered together works from the school at the Mayor Gallery, in London, from March 20. Two other exhibitions are being devoted to the most flamboyant of the sink quarter: the grand old man of Kitch, Bratby.

The Mayor exhibition, "The Kitchen Sink Painters", results from a truce between Mr Hartnoll and Andrew Murray of the Mayor. Finding themselves bidding six years ago at Sotheby's for Smith's baby painting, they formed a non-competition pact, and proceeded to corner what was a non-existent market. Now they are hoping to revive these pallid products of post-war Britain: visual art's equivalent of the Angry Young Men. The plan is undoubtedly helped by the argument that Kitchen Sink has historical importance to art, as a predecessor to Pop Art, and a timely protest against the power of the "sober, restrained and gentlemanly form of realism associated with the Euston Road school", as Frances Spalding calls it in the catalogue.

The question is whether

there is a market today for the "certain tough melancholy that admits no despair", as Bratby has called it. Mr Hartnoll and Mr Murray are labouring against a number of odds. First, the four-member "movement" — Bratby, Smith, Derrick Greaves and Edward Middleditch — had no manifesto and no shared style. All they had in common was shared studenthood at the Royal College of Art, a mentor in the form of the eccentric

as with many art movements, coined in a derisory critique. You can find everything in these pictures, wrote David Sylvester in 1954, adding, with Smith's painting in mind, "the kitchen sink, too".

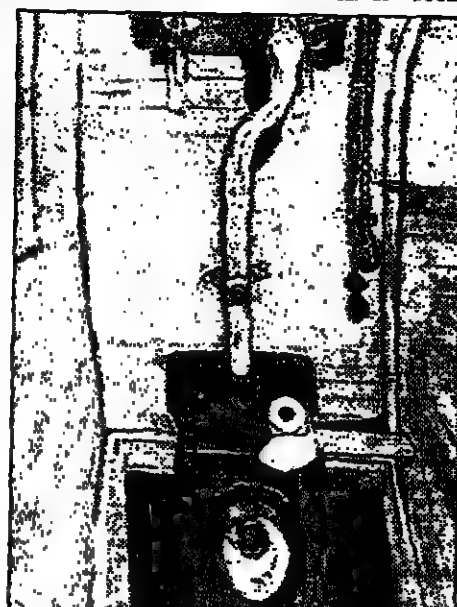
Establishment recognition reached a peak when the group was selected to represent Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1956. However, when the Tate opened "Modern Art in the United States" that year, a room of abstract expressionist

paintings proved enough to turn off the public's ardour for Bratby and his friends. Soon Mr Berger produced a series of articles attacking Smith and Bratby. In 1959 the artist and academic Sir William Coldstream produced the report which turned British fine art training away from the Euston Road tradition, towards abstraction and conceptualism. The 1964 appointment of Sir Norman Reid as director of the Tate was the final nail in the coffin.

Now we must wait and see whether the wheel of taste has turned full-circle. The prices for Greaves, Smith and Middleditch are difficult to assess because their works are relatively rare. Mr Hartnoll bought *Bed-springs, Chair, Flowers* by Middleditch, an unusually aesthetic work for the group, five years ago for the "lower thousands" at Sotheby's, bidding against the Tate. He is now asking £30,000 for it. The Smith, over which he and Mr Murray fought, is £20,000.

Until they came along, the prices for Bratby, a prolific artist who has exhibited at the Royal Academy summer exhibition annually since 1960, performed as follows:

1960 (when he was the most famous living British artist): £200 to £300 (*The Artist Painting a Picture*); 1970: £200 to £300 (*Gloria Smiling, Judy Demure*); 1980: £655 (*Glenn Sunflowers*); 1990: £5,000 (Various paintings of Venetian scenes). The Albemarle Gallery is asking £2,400-£3,000 for this



Finished in Hollywood: Leo by John Bratby, painted at the height of his fame in 1956

The question is whether there is a market for the 'certain tough melancholy that admits no despair'



Reflection of the Fifties: these days Jack Smith refuses to talk about his Kitchen Sink work

year's products at its exhibition of strange multiple portraits of Bratby's current wife, grinning from split leather bodies, and the Mayor is asking £6,000 for a *Fifties Sunflowers*, £8,500 for *Sicily* and £20,000 for the huge *Painting*, featuring repeated images of a single model, and various repeated parts of the artist's body as he paints.

Bratby could be Mr Hartnoll's biggest gamble. Since his fall from critical favour in 1956, Bratby has continued to paint prolifically, defiantly, consistently out-stripping himself in respect of garishness and crudity of subject matter. His work inspires mockery and admiration equally.

Blasting from the past

Guns

When Sir Joseph Nickerson was taken to hospital after being accidentally shot by Lord Whitelaw in 1984, the surgeon was horrified to see on the X-ray a constellation of shot spreading much further than the wound. The patient reassured him that this was due to the amount of game he had eaten recently.

The anecdote perfectly evokes Sir Joseph, or Partridge Joe, as he was nicknamed: a sports-wearing blood-sports enthusiast (188,000 birds shot during his lifetime) and animal lover.

Now, a year after his death at 75, Christie's is offering a chance for shooting friends (who included the Dukes of Edinburgh and Westminster, as well as enthusiasts who have waded through the turgid leaves of his book, *A Shooting Man's Creed*, to buy some of his famous guns.

Shooting being the second biggest participation sport in Britain after fishing, the auction of 28 lots is estimated at £250,000.

Apart from being a stickler for etiquette on the shoot ("We all know the feeling on sporting a well-known greedy shot: I hope I'm not drawn next to him!" he wrote), Sir Joseph had a preference for light, narrow-bore guns with over-and-under barrels (rather than side-by-side), because of ease of handling.

The collection ranges from rifles used for vermin to what Americans call "gingerbread guns", whose appeal is in the ornateness of their engravings. These are mainly British examples built in the Twenties, Thirties and Forties — a golden age for gunmaking — some engraved with the bold scrolls of Holland & Holland, some resembling an aerial view of a stately garden, by J. Purdey. "These are works of art," says Christopher Austyn, a Christie's expert.

Included in the collection are a number of sidelock ejector guns by Woodward, Sir Joseph's favourite maker, at £8,000 to £12,000. The highest estimate is for a trio of his much-loved lightweight



Bidders in his sights: Christopher Austyn of Christie's with Sir Joseph Nickerson's collection

Purdey 20 and 28-bore guns, handmade to order and completed in 1977 (estimated at £50,000 to £80,000).

A number of lots, such as a 12-bore over-and-under sidelock ejector gun by J. Purdey (estimated at up to £30,000), are catalogued "the gun appears to be virtually unused". Having being tailor-made for him, the stocks of Sir Joseph's guns will have to be adjusted by their makers for their new owners. Some guns are understood to have been kept back by his family.

Christie's caution about the estimates is partly because of prevailing market conditions, and partly because of the crushing effect on the gun market of the Hungerford massacre four years ago. As a result, the Fire Arms Amendment Act of 1988 made ownership of guns more difficult, and people decided to offload them en masse. "We had low quality guns coming on to the market we couldn't sell, and a lot more decent

Partridge Joe was an animal lover and blood sports enthusiast who shot 188,000 birds

guns where owners couldn't see the point of owning them any more," Mr Austyn says. Likewise, the anti-blood sports lobby has been influencing public attitudes, and last November the National Trust passed a resolution recommending a ban on deer hunting on trust land. Sir Joseph's admirers point out, however, that despite his trigger-happy lifestyle, he was a founder member of the World Wildlife Fund (now the World Wide Fund for Nature), as well as the Joseph Nickerson

Heather Improvement Foundation, designed to protect moorland and provide a more effective management of sheep and grouse on his estates at Rothwell, Lincolnshire and County Durham.

The happiest gun investors bought in the Sixties and sold in the Eighties. The prospects are now, Mr Austyn says, "long term". The best bet is to buy a top quality gun for as little as possible and keep it for some years. The world record of £121,000 was reached in 1989 for a pair of gold side-by-side guns engraved by the English craftsman, Ken Hunt. Lately the strongest buyers have been the Americans, and Mr Austyn hopes that, with the Gulf war over, they will be in good bidding form again.

S.J.C. Sir Joseph Nickerson's collection of modern sporting guns is at Christie's King Street (071-839 9060) on Wednesday. A *Shooting Man's Creed* is published by Sidgwick & Jackson, price £16.95.

Mystery rock lifts gloom

Review

True blue: Christie's brightened the art market gloom yesterday by announcing plans to sell the largest sapphire ever to come to auction. The size of a clover's egg, the dark blue stone weighs 337.6 carats and is estimated at £1 million. It will be offered in Geneva on May 16 by a mystery Englishwoman, described by Raymond Sanicroff-Baker of Christie's as a "very modest ordinary country lady in her late eighties, living in a humble little house". The jewel came to its present owner around 1930.

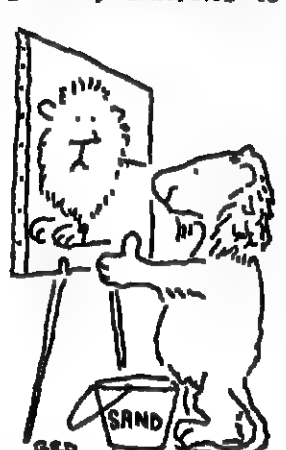
Top pot: An English Delft snout broke the record for stoneware when a rare example in globular form, painted with whorl and lozenge-shaped motifs, fetched £23,100 (four times the estimate) at Phillips. The buyer was Alistair Sampson, the London dealer.

Classy cuts: A unique archive of more than 100 pattern books, fetched £97,700, or three times its estimate, at Christie's South Kensington. The Victoria & Albert museum paid £1,650 (on top estimate) for an assortment of furnishings, textiles and "sanitary paper hangings", while Colfax & Fowler paid £1,045 (estimate £200-£300) for *Light Fancies* 1874, approximately 1,725 patterns massed at six per page. Dating from the mid-1800s to the 1960s, the archive was from the Manchester firm of Lockett and Crossland.

makers from at least 1710 to 1979 at Phillips in London 11am. In Turkey, Beane's has silver at 10am and jewels at 1pm. At Sotheby's Sussex there are named miniatures at 2pm.

Thursday: A busy day at Christie's South Kensington, with British and continental ceramics at 10.30am and 2pm, and further sales of cameras and optical toys, and picture frames and artists' materials, both at 2pm. A Noddy coin-in-the-slot stereo viewer is included, along with the Leicas (up to £1,000). In a furniture sale at Betchingley, Lawrences has an unusual William IV music stool-chair.

Friday: Eighteenth and 19th century snuff boxes are generally attributed to



"Zobel", but it is not always clear which members of this artistic family were responsible. There is a good one of a snuff-box in a Phillips sale at Ringwood (up to £400).

Preview

Today: Among the antique and modern furniture in a sale at Mainstreet Trading of

Mainstreet Trading, Main Street, St Boswells, Melrose (0835 23974). Wealden Auction Galleries, 23 Rendley Drive, Cranbrook, Kent (0580 714322). Aldridge, 130-132 Walcot Street, Bath (0225 462830). Beane's, Rainbow Avenue Road, Torquay (0803 296277). Sotheby's, Summers House, 23 Rendley Drive, Cranbrook, Kent (0580 714322). Phillips, 101 New Bond Street, W1 (071-629 6602). Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, SW7 (071-581 7611). Lawrence's, 80 High Street, Betchingley, Surrey (0883 743323). Phillips, 34 Southampton Road, Ringwood, Hants (0425 473333).

Monday: A 3pm start seems quite a challenge for a 900-lot sale, but that is when the Wealden Auction starts in the Cranbrook Vestry Hall. There are guns, fishing rods and golf clubs as well as paintings, furniture and objects d'art.

Tuesday: There is a good selection of Windsor chairs in the furniture sale at Aldridge in Bath, 10am.

Wednesday: Musical instruments and bows by good

makers from at least 1710 to 1979 at Phillips in London 11am. In Turkey, Beane's has silver at 10am and jewels at 1pm. At Sotheby's Sussex there are named miniatures at 2pm.

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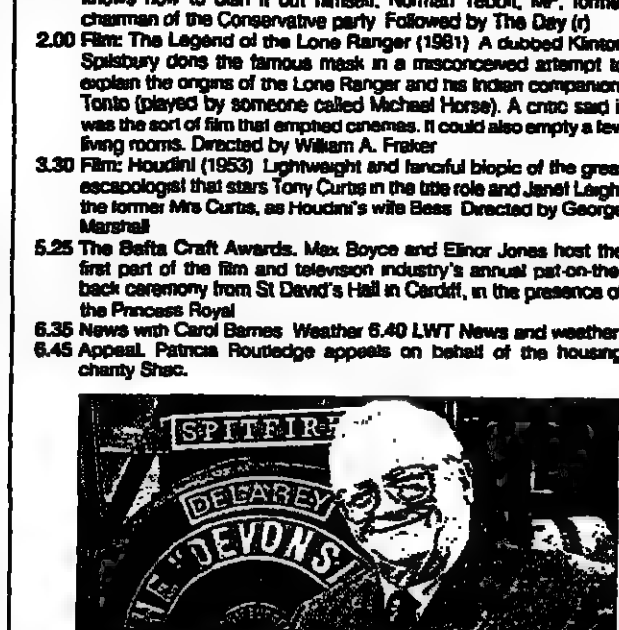
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45 Open University: Wages of Action - Religion in a Hindu village 7.35 Film as Historical Evidence: Poverty in the 1930s 8.00 News 8.15 Maths Methods: Complex Exponentials 8.30 News 8.45 Open University: Wages of Action (r) 9.00 Young explores what it means to be a 'giver' and the difference between being alive and living 10.00 France Actualité: Series of films on modern France (r) 10.15 (to 12.30) See You Sunday 10.25 Médecin Vivre: Part three of an introduction to Moroccan Spanish (r) 10.50 Step up to Wordpower: Chris Stone presents the literary programme for adults (r) 11.15 A Household Name: Practical hints for adults 11.40 Bazaar: Household hints and tips presented by Nerys Hughes (r) 12.05 Sign Extra: A sign language edition of the consumer programme Watchdog 12.30 Country File: John Craven reports on the sale of forest land to private owners and the resulting restrictions on public access to many of Britain's woods and forests. Wales: Farming in Wales 12.55 Weather 1.00 News Followed by On The Record: What is the hidden agenda of Michael Heseltine's tax review? Polly Toynbee chairs a studio discussion between Baroness Hogg and MP's Rhodes Boyson and Keith Hampson 1.00 EastEnders: Omnibus edition (r). (Ceefax) 1.00 Match of the Day: Road to Wembley. Desmond Lynam introduces live coverage of the FA Cup sixth round tie between Tottenham Hotspur and second division Notts County. The commentary is provided by John Motson and Trevor Stirling at White Hart Lane, with analysis in the studio from Jimmy Hill and Bob Wilson 1.05 The Clothes Show: The team travel to Milan where Jeff Banks and Carolyn Franklin report on the Italian and British autumn/winter 91/92 collections. Also a report on London Fashion Week and the campaign to sell British fashion 1.30 Antiques Roadshow visits Stafford. The piddlers are rich and the team run into the finest scientific instrument ever seen on the show. (Ceefax) 1.35 OK 2 Talk Footage: Children's reaction to parental divorce. 1.25 News with Martin Lewis. Weather. 1.40 Songs of Praise from the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra. (Ceefax) (postponed from February 24) 1.45 British Soldiers: Tired comedy about the exploits of a Royal Artillery regiment. Starring Karl Howman. (Ceefax) 1.45 Lovejoy: Lily's Parents. Deliciously tongue-in-cheek starring Ian McEwan as the dodgy antique dealer. Lovejoy's talents for sniffing out the genuine article seem to work just as well when it comes to ferreting out rodents, as he discovers in a meeting with a property developer wanting to go into business with Lady Jane's husband. (Ceefax) 1.50 Butterflies: Wendy Craig as Rita, the housewife in search of a more exciting life. In the re-run of Carla Lane's perceptive sitcom. Leonard wants to have a romantic lunch with Rita on his birthday, but Rita is dreaming of other things (r) 1.50 News with Martin Lewis. (Ceefax) Weather 1.55 The Last Consumer edition presented by Esther Rantzen 2.00 Measurmen introduced by Magnus Magnusson from the Measuring House Chapel at the University of Sussex. This week's specialist subjects are Thomas Telford; the vampire in popular English fiction, 1819-1988; Gloucester Cathedral; and George Bernard Shaw 2.05 The Rebel Soldier: Victor Williams with Jean Belkorell (10.30pm) 10.30 Heart of the Matter: A Soldier's Conscience. John Bawell talks to Victor Williams, the soldier who deserted his regiment on the night before they were due to fly to the Gulf, about the decision that ruined his career 11.05 The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd. Amusing American comedy series starring Shirley MacLaine 11.30 Measurmen: A look at how a breakdown in communication within a multicultural society may occur, despite the existence of a common language 12.00am Measurmen (r) 1.00 Weather

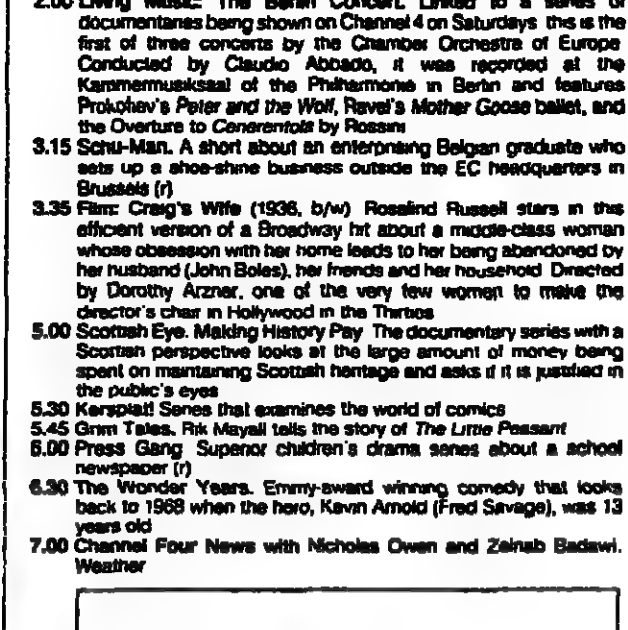
BBC 2
6.35 Open University. 12.00 Regional Political Reviews. Wales: Sign Extra 12.30 Sunday. Ian Macfarlane presents news of parliamentary committees. (Ceefax) 1.00 Open University: Mastering Management - For Trainee Managers 1.25 One in Four: Magazine programme for the disabled (r) 1.55 Amnesia New. The Boy and the Snowgoose 2.05 Film 91 Special. Barry Norman talks to Francis Ford Coppola about his up-and-down career and the Godfather trilogy (r) 2.45 The Barry Awards for Comic Relief. Barry Norman presents Friday's Comic Relief appeal (r) 3.00 Film: Monte Carlo or Bust (1959) Peter Cook and Dudley Moore join a star-studded cast in Ken Annakin's lachrymose sequel to his 1955 hit. Those Magnificent Men in Their Flying Machines. Automobile machines are celebrated in this outing which pits villain Tony Thomas against Tony Curtis in a Twenties car race over the 1,500 mile Monte Carlo Rally 5.00 Rugby Special. Chris Rea introduces highlights of Bath v Wasps in the Courage league. Wales: Pontypridd v Swansea and Llanelli v Pontypool 6.00 Athletics. The IAAF world indoor championships from Seville 6.35 The Money Programme. Michael Robinson reports on the economic priorities that are pulling the Soviet Union apart 7.15 The Natural World: Marathon Birds 8.00 CHOICE: Clever French scientists have discovered that by fitting a small radio transmitter to an albatross they can track by satellite the long-distance journeys of this majestic sea bird as it visits vast areas of the Indian Ocean. One bird logged 8,700 miles, the distance from London to Australia, in 25 days. There is much else of fascination in Lancelotti's film, which takes in locations on the Falklands, the Galapagos, the Laysan Islands and Hawaii. The albatross is a creature of many climes. There are obligatory sequences of courtship and breeding but a welcome respite from those scenes of gory killing that disfigure so many wildlife documentaries. Titled 'The Rhythm of the Ancient Mariner', while offering spectacular proof that the real albatross is no dead weight round anyone's neck. (Ceefax) 8.05 Naked Hollywood: Good Cop, Bad Cop. The safari into the jungle of Hollywood continues with a look at producers. Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer are the biggest, most flamboyant producers in Tinseltown, with credits including Top Gun and Beverly Hills Cop. Meanwhile Lynda Obst and Debra Hill have taken on the challenge of Terry Gilliam, director of The Adventures of Baron Munchausen, which went millions of dollars over budget and sank a studio 8.55 How Are The Kids? A table without words about a boy who is the only white child in his school. Directed by the comedian Jerry Lewis and set to music by Georges Delnuoy (r) 9.05 Baryshnikov Dances Balanchine. Baryshnikov and his company, American Ballet Theatre, dance two contrasting pieces. Apollo is set to music by Stravinsky, while Who Cares? features familiar tunes from Gershwin (r) 10.00 Screen Two: Morphine and Dolly Mabrures. 10.05 CHOICE: An unrelenting drama from the writer-director Karl Franz shows a first-hand account of child abuse in Fintona Wales. The perpetrator is a father of five, a Korean war veteran, alcoholic, addicted to morphine and prone to fits of violence. The victim is his 11-year-old daughter, who is left in charge of the younger children after the mother dies from a brain tumour. Social and medical services are notable for their absence and the family descends inexorably into hell. Such a sombre story hardly makes for easy viewing, particularly as there is no bending of the truth to convince a neat resolution. But the piece produces two tremendous performances, from the actor Patrick Bergin, as the tormented father, and from young Joanna Griffiths in her first television part as the battered girl. She was chosen from 200 girls who auditioned for the part. They chose right. (Ceefax) 11.35 Grand Prix. Highlights of the US Grand Prix from Phoenix, Arizona 12.25am Sports. Cliff music show (r) 12.55 Rapido presented by Antonio de Caunes (r). Ends at 1.30

ITV
8.00 TV-am. Includes, at 8.00. Frost on Sunday with Maye Even. Among the guests is Noel Parkinson 9.25 The Disney Club. A special Mothering Sunday edition with guests New Kids On the Block 10.45 Link. Magazine series on disabled matters 11.00 Morning Worship from Westgate Baptist Church, Bradford 12.00 Encounter: It's Hard Being a Woman. The role of Muslim women in the Middle East is discussed by Shahwar Sadeque, the BBC's first Asian governor 12.30 LWT News Weekend 1.00 News with Carol Barnes Weather 1.10 Walden. In the first programme of a new series Brian Walden exercises his abrasive interviewing technique on someone who knows how to draw it out himself. Norman Tebbit, MP, former chairman of the Conservative Party followed by The Day (r) 2.00 Film: The Legend of the Lone Ranger (1981) A dubbed Kinton Spalding does the famous, mostly in a reconstructed attempt to explain the origins of the Lone Ranger and his Indian companion Tonto (played by someone called Michael Horse). A critic said it was the sort of film that emptied cinemas. It could also empty a few living rooms. Directed by William A. Fraker 3.30 Film: Houdini (1953) Lighthearted and fanciful biopic of the great escapee that stars Tony Curtis in the title role and Janet Leigh, the former Mrs Curtis, as Houdini's wife Bess. Directed by George Marshall 5.25 The Belfra Craft Awards. Max Boyce and Elinor Jones host the first part of the film and television industry's annual on-the-back ceremony from St David's Hall in Cardiff, in the presence of the Princess Royal 6.35 News with Carol Barnes Weather 6.40 LWT News and weather 6.45 Appeal. Patrick Routledge appeals on behalf of the housing charity Shac. 6.50 Highway. Sir Harry Secombe religiously sings his way through the rocklands area in North Wales 7.20 Trouble in Mind: Down Memory Lane. Tapid sitcom starring Richard O'Sullivan as psychiatrist Adam Charlesworth. In this episode everyone forgets something Adam's wife Julia (Susan Penhaigon) forgets a weekend break, Adam forgets his appointment with Malcolm, and Mr Franklin, a patient, forgets to arrive for his own appointment. (Ceefax) 7.50 Murder, She Wrote: O'Malley's Luck. American mystery series about writer Jessica Fletcher (Angela Lansbury), who always manages to be in the vicinity when a murder takes place. By now she cannot have many friends or relatives left, so she helps detective Jim O'Malley (Pat Hingle) who does not accept a suicide verdict on the wife of a local property developer. (Ceefax) 8.45 News with Julia Somerville. Weather 9.05 LWT News 9.10 Agatha Christie's Poirot: The Mystery of Hunter's Lodge. Detective series stronger on style than substance, but what style! And David Suchet's Poirot is a brilliant piece of acting, right down to that dandy little walk. Agatha Christie would surely have approved. Poirot and his Watson-Johnson (Hugh Fraser) are involved by Roger Hargrave (John Hargrave) for a group-shooting weekend, but it is not just the guests that end up dead. (Ceefax) 10.10 Find a Family. The launch of the third ITV campaign to find homes for children in care 10.25 Cool Head. Rubber-faced comedian Phil Cool contorts his face into some more impressions before a live audience 10.55 Film: Letting Go (1989) A made-for-television comedy-romance starring Sharon Glass and John Ritter as two witty people who have recently lost their partners and discover each other at a self-help group. Directed by Jack Bender 12.40am The ITV Chart Show. (r) 1.40 New Music. Rock and pop magazine 2.45 Indy Car Racing. American motor sport 3.45 Pick of the Week. Regional television highlights 4.10 The Lawrence Years: The Al Brown Story. A mobster tries to take over his boss's territory 4.40 Adventure. Man continues his battles against nature and the elements 5.05 Wanted: Dead or Alive (b/w). Vintage western series starring Steve McQueen as a bounty hunter (r) 5.30 ITV Morning News. Ends at 6.00

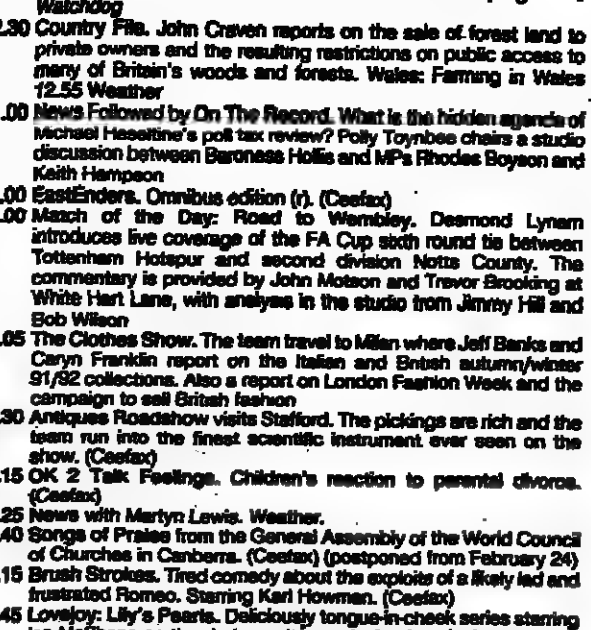
CHANNEL 4
8.00 Trans World Sport (r) 7.00 The Complete Skier. Featuring the joys of Nordic skiing 7.30 Dr Shoggy's Amusement 8.00 The Buffers 8.30 Bobocots 9.00 Early Bird. Informative children's magazine 9.25 Maffin! The music series that explores the sounds of ghazal and gawwal music from India and Pakistan features the acclaimed Pakistani-based classical singer Akbar Paveen 10.00 A Week in Politics - Second Reading includes an interview with the trade and industry secretary Peter Lilley 10.45 Darts. Carleton 11.00 Boon! Fox croquet (r) 11.30 Star Trek: Next Generation. The second New Order reveals all to the new computer 12.00 The Westerns 1.00 Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea (b/w) (r) 2.00 Living Music: The Berlin Concert. Linked to a series of documentaries being shown on Channel 4 on Saturdays this is the first of three concerts by the Chamber Orchestra of Europe Conducted by Claudio Abbado. It was recorded at the Konzerthaus in Berlin and features Prokofiev's Peter and the Wolf, Ravel's Mother Goose ballet, and the Overture to Cenerentola by Rossini 3.15 Schumi-Man. A short about an enterprising Belgian graduate who sets up a shoe-store business outside the EC headquarters in Brussels (r) 3.35 Film: Craig's Wife (1936, b/w) Rosalind Russell stars in the efficient version of a Broadway hit about a middle-class woman whose obsession with her home leads to her being abandoned by her husband (John Boles), her friends and her household. Directed by Dorothy Arzner, one of the very few women to make the director's chair in Hollywood in the Thirties 5.00 Scottish Eye. Making History Pay. The documentary series with a Scottish perspective looks at the large amount of money being spent on maintaining Scottish heritage and asks if it is justified in the public's eyes 5.30 Kersplett Series that examines the world of comics 5.45 Ginn Tales. Rick Mayall tells the story of The Little Princess 6.00 Press Gang. Superior children's drama series about a school newspaper (r) 6.30 The Wonder Years. Emmy-award winning comedy that looks back to 1968 when the hero, Kevin Arnold (Fred Savage), was 13 years old 7.00 Channel Four News with Nicholas Owen and Zohab Badawi. Weather



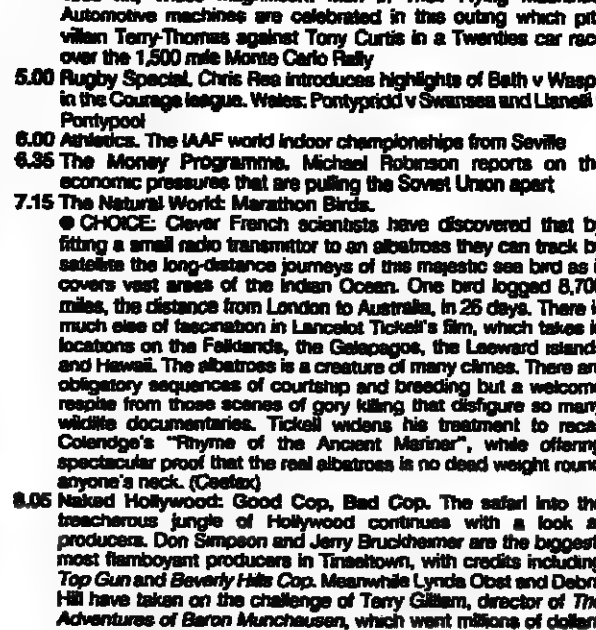
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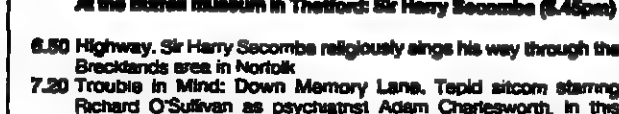
The magical city: a musical journey through Venice (8.00pm)



Rebel soldier: Victor Williams with Jean Belkorell (10.30pm)



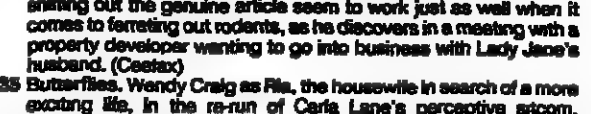
A case of child abuse: Joanna Griffiths, Patrick Bergin (10.00pm)



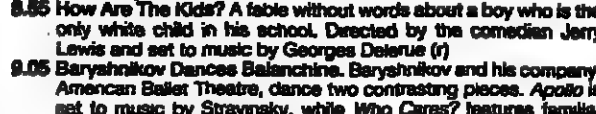
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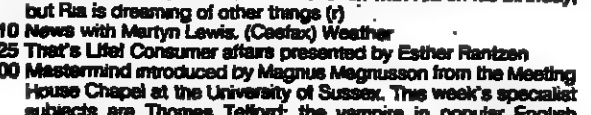
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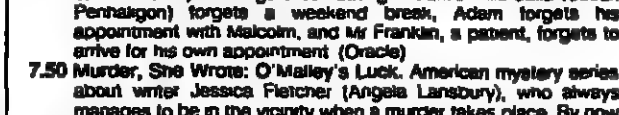
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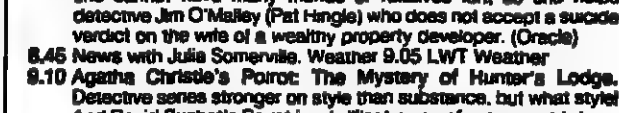
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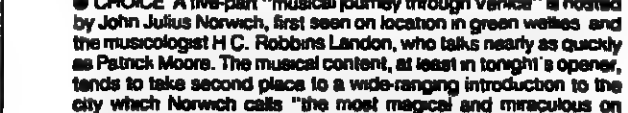
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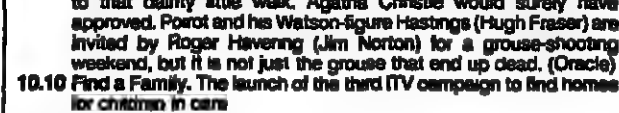
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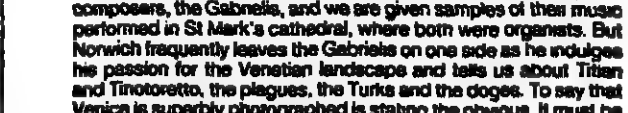
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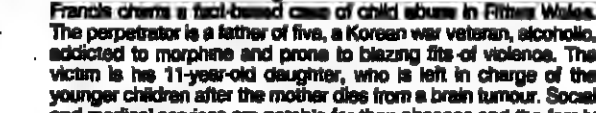
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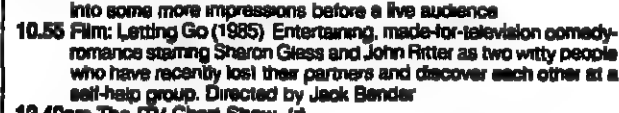
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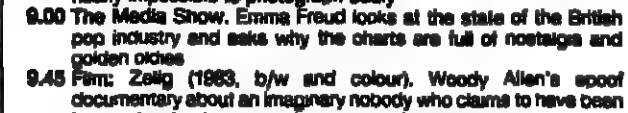
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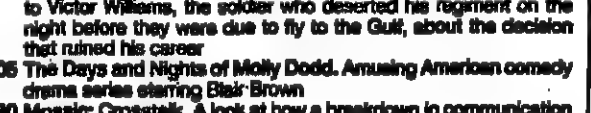
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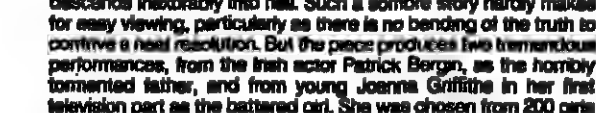
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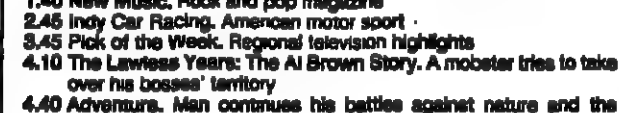
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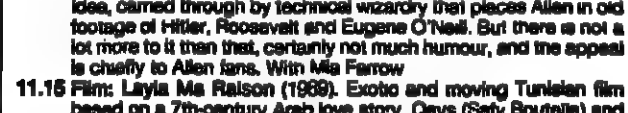
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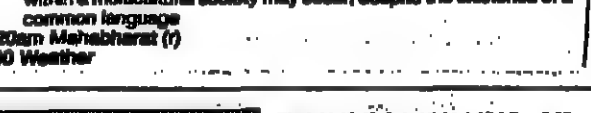
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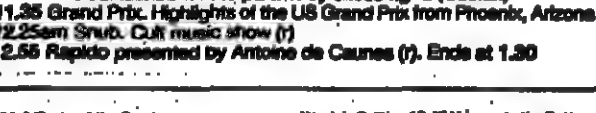
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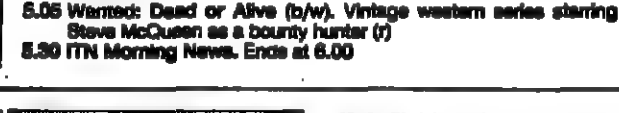
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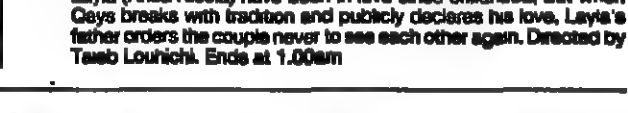
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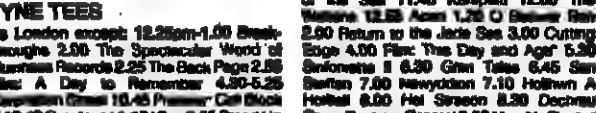
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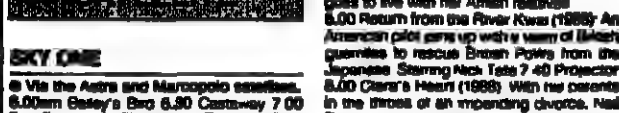
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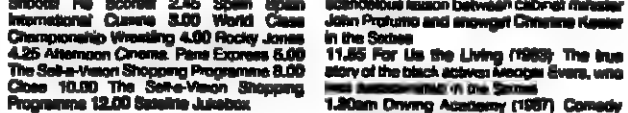
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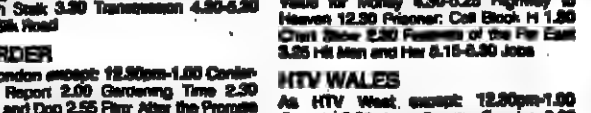
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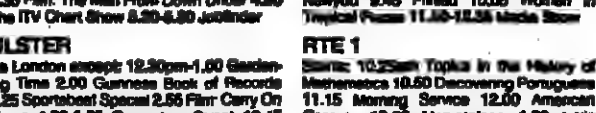
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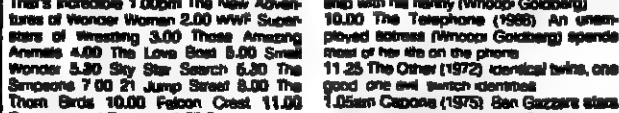
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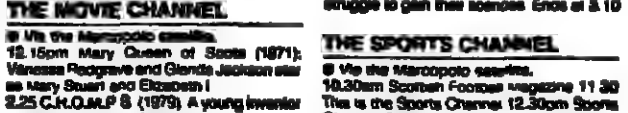
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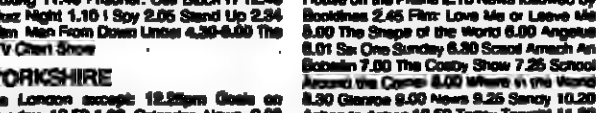
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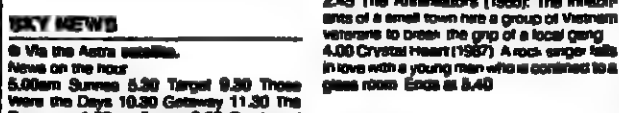
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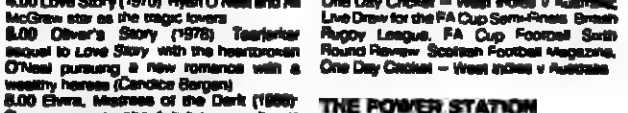
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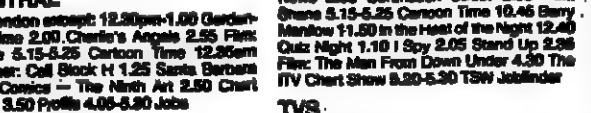
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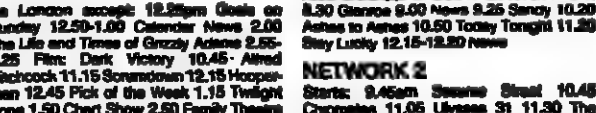
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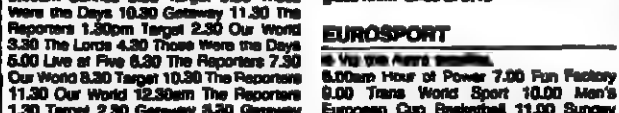
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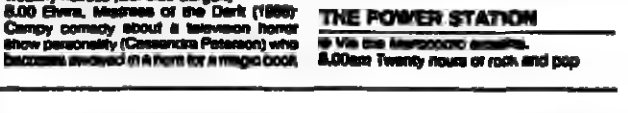
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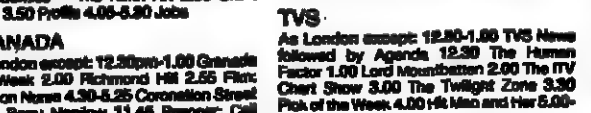
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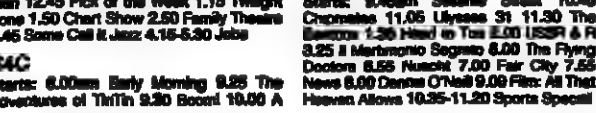
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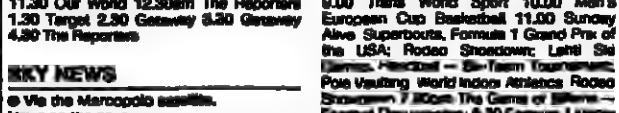
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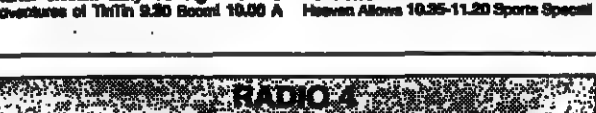
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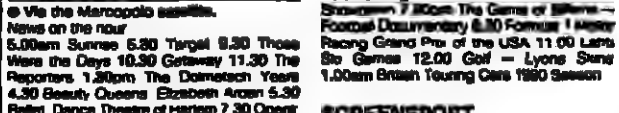
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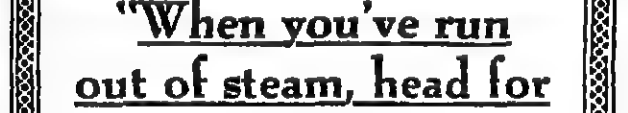
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A case of child abuse: Joanna Griffiths, Patrick Bergin (10.00pm)



At the Russell Museum in Thetford: Sir Harry Secombe (6.40pm)



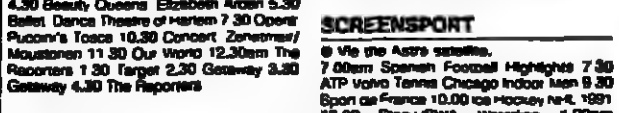
The magical city: a musical journey through Venice (8.00pm)



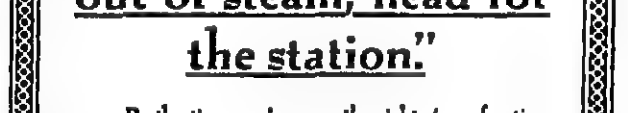
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The magical city: a musical journey through Venice (8.00pm)

Thatcher warns US on Europe

FROM PETER STOTHARD, US EDITOR, IN WASHINGTON

MARGARET Thatcher yesterday broke her silence on the European issues which helped end her premiership, attacking the utopian aspirations of those who wanted a European superstate. In an outspoken address to American conservative groups, she said a struggle was underway for Europe's future and it was in the American interest that her view prevail over that of her critics.

She said that if Europe had had a united foreign and defence policy last autumn, America would have been left to "stand alone" after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. "Compromise would almost certainly have left Europe on the sidelines", she said.

She said that protectionist pressure from Brussels would weaken the military ties across the Atlantic.

Attacking the Soviet Union's failure to fulfil its treaty commitments to cut conventional forces in Europe, Mrs Thatcher said that the new Soviet uncertainty ought to be a warning to Europe that "international dangers can rarely be predicted". Mr Gorbachev still deserved support but "Nato must not be discarded".

She suggested that it was now time to consider whether the plans to reduce spending on defence should be revised. She criticised the German refusal to send troops to the Gulf, saying: "A full commitment to the defence of international freedom and stability requires risking life as well as treasure". She also mocked the French notion that a new Europe could be reconstructed from a philosophical idea rather than from the hard lessons of history.

She said some of the aspirations of a European superstate were noble but others were cynical and naive. Political institutions could not be imposed if they were to endure. "A community lacking a common language can have no public opinion to which the bureaucrats are accountable".

Mrs Thatcher reinforced the private fears of senior administration officials that a European superstate would almost certainly develop interests and attitudes at variance with those of America.

sidelines", she said. In a speech which triumphantly re-emphasised the virtues of the decade in which she shared the centre stage with Ronald Reagan, she said: "The United States should continue to play that dominant role in Nato to which we have become accustomed". She praised the wartime leadership of George Bush as "of the highest order" but gave a warning of Washington's "exaggerated hopes" about the European Community.

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Kremlin's 'shadow masters'

Continued from page 1

President Bush has conspicuously appealed not to Mr Gorbachev, but to the "Soviet leadership" or the "Soviet government" to return to a reformist path.

Mr Shevardnadze, who is setting up a Western-style foreign policy think-tank in Moscow, believed that for Mr Gorbachev to resign now would be "the worst option", and appeared to denounce Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Republic, who recently demanded just that. From a Soviet point of view, the most striking thing about Mr Shevardnadze's remarks was that he is still giving Mr Gorbachev the benefit of any doubt rather than assume that he bears much of the responsibility for the recent hardline shift in policy.

While many reformers would agree that there are alternative centres of power, most say Mr Gorbachev must be held accountable for failure to bring these forces to heel.



Herald of spring: the annual show of crocuses at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, are now reaching their peak. They have flowered from 1.6 million corms planted in 1987

Social services chief resigns

By JILL SHERMAN
SOCIAL SERVICES
CORRESPONDENT

THE director of Rochdale social services resigned last night after criticism by a judge of his department's handling of alleged child abuse cases. Gordon Littlemore said that he was leaving with regret.

Mr Justice Douglas Brown said that the children's stories were fantasy and he allowed ten of them to go home. The judge said that social workers had not heeded government guidelines laid down after the Cleveland affair and criticised officials for not keeping proper records of interviews. He also said that leading questions had been asked encouraging children to exaggerate and fabricate stories.

Following a three month hearing in camera at the High

Court in Manchester, the judge ruled in public that none of the 17 Rochdale children taking from their homes had suffered ritual abuse. The local authority had contended that the children's talk of sexual abuse and the killings of babies and animals was not fantasy but could have been drug induced. The judge said, however, that there was no evidence that the families had used drugs nor that babies were missing or had been found dead or mutilated.

John Pierce, Rochdale council chief executive, who received the resignation with deep sorrow, said that the authority would implement Mr Justice Douglas Brown's recommendations for improving procedures. He said that Mr Littlemore's decision was his own and was an example of his willingness to accept the

weight of the responsibility that fell upon him.

Mr Littlemore, who has worked at Rochdale since 1974, said that the social workers in the cases acted in good faith and what they believed was in the best interests of the children. "Within the social services department we have highly motivated and dedicated workers who I am sure will continue to provide excellent care and support for children, families and other vulnerable people in the borough." None of the staff are being disciplined by the council.

Mr Pierce said that the council would not try to reopen the cases. "Nor are we here to put on a brave face or to claim that we did nothing wrong. We accept what the judge has said. That means accepting that we made mis-

takes and that there are lessons we and every other social services department must learn. But to imagine that this is a simple matter of winners and losers is to forget the appalling difficult job we, as a society, ask our social workers to do."

Mr Pierce said action had already been taken, including the appointment of a child protection manager. Three more senior officers would be appointed to organise and record case conferences. Interviews would be videotaped and any inaccuracies in minutes of case conferences would be rectified immediately. The social workers involved were not handling abuse cases. Richard Farnell, council leader, said: "Nothing the judge said was critical of the professionalism of individual members of staff."

Farewell to holidays with Club 18-30

Continued from page 1

the driver. Excess was, it seemed, built into the Club 18-30 experience because of the company's policy of paying their reps only half their salaries up-front. The rest was made up from commission on the tickets he sold for the parties he had organised.

The rep had to make sure they were good parties. So we had competitions to drink as much sangria as possible, competitions to dive for bottles of Aspi Spumante and endurance games on the beach involving punts of beer. There were organised games of strip the girls and strip the rep, and unorganised games of strip in your hotel room.

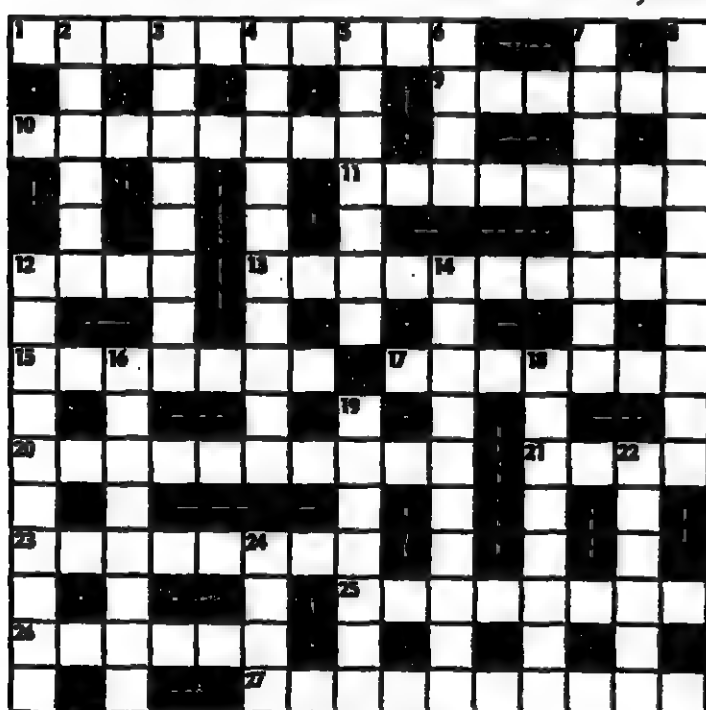
The San Antonio police were kept busy. By the end of June 1987, when I went, there

had been nearly 150 tourist incidents dealt with by the police and these did not include petty crimes but more serious incidents.

In July every year, Spain's specially trained riot police are drafted into San Antonio to cope with gangs of beer-soaked Britons. The week before I arrived a Club 18-30 girl had died after walking in front of a coach on her way back from a bar. San Antonio has 470 bars.

Club 18-30's defence was always that, as the biggest youth holiday company in the world, it was always going to get into the headlines. It was always going to be a bit of a nuisance. It also said, rightly, that its reputation for offering sex holidays was greatly exaggerated. This was true. There was too much drink to do it.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,549



- ACROSS**
- 1 Remove cover and prepare to receive deliveries (5,5).
 - 9 Showing arrogance in high position, with contemptuous expression (6).
 - 10 Writer creating leading characters in new serial (8).
 - 11 Consideration for others - a Liberal platitude (8).
 - 12 TNT is in these detonators (4).
 - 13 Rich Milanese noble goes to America (10).
 - 15 Disorder in a Mediterranean port (7).
 - 17 Shoemaker's work on side of Wellington (7).
 - 20 Mac West's biography found in this? (4,6).
 - 21 Name Lawrence acquired as author (4).
 - 23 Action halted as cold wind engulfs one (8).
 - 25 Not a well-earned degree (8).
 - 26 Graduation from new university with a new church (6).
 - 27 Go to work on the railway (4,6).
- DOWN**
- 2 A maiden - and a possible name for her? (6).
 - 3 Explanation for mistaking of six geese (8).
 - 4 Enormous sort of car for a Chinese native (5,5).
 - 5 Dancing girl mostly supportive of Jack's rebellious son (7).
 - 6 Pipeline put under water, we hear (4).
 - 7 Roman force I hit hard, as sacker of Rome (8).
 - 8 Torture for diminutive general's cousin (10).
 - 12 FBI gap in bouquet, say (10).
 - 14 Fly over land that's constantly burning (5,5).
 - 16 Basic equestrian ability achieved by vast majority (4,4).
 - 18 Libertine chase, to begin with, like a heavenly body (8).
 - 19 Frolic in "Blue Spirit" (7).
 - 22 Engaged in sailing manoeuvre in storm (6).
 - 24 The same endless newspapers turned up (4).

Answers to Puzzle No 18,548

WOLFGANG AMATEUR
TILLY
COMPLEMENT
MILAN
RODOLFO
DANCE
COLORED
DISORDER
SHOEMAKER
MAC WEST
LAWRENCE
ACTION
NOT A
GRADUATION
GO TO WORK

Answers to Puzzle No 18,549

ACROSS
1. UNCOVER
9. HAIR
10. CHARACTERS
11. LIBERAL
12. DETONATORS
13. MILAN
15. DISORDER
17. SHOEMAKER
20. MAC WEST
21. LAWRENCE
23. ACTION
25. NOT A
26. GRADUATION
27. GO TO WORK

DOWN
2. MAIDEN
3. EXPLANATION
4. ENORMOUS
5. DANCING
6. PIPELINE
7. ROMAN
8. TORTURE
12. FBI
14. FLY
16. EQUESTRIAN
18. LIBERTINE
19. FROLIC
22. ENGAGED
24. THE SAME

By Philip Howard

DOZYWOICE
a. Asleep on sandy dunes
b. A jolly cart
c. Lying support

HAIR
a. A lady here
b. A coiled's snail
c. To serve or preserve

BEREMOUSE
a. A bat
b. The rearguard
c. To reserve again

LANICER
a. A cry of
b. Bearing arms
c. St Andrew's cross

Answers on page 13

For the latest region by region forecast, 24 hours a day, dial 0888 500 followed by the appropriate code.

Region	Forecast
Greater London	701
Kent/Surrey/Sussex	702
Devon & Cornwall	703
Wiltshire/Avon/Somerset	704
Berkshire/Bucks/Oxon	705
Bedfordshire/Herts	706
Northamptonshire	707
West Midlands & Shropshire	708
East Midlands	709
Yorkshire & Lancashire	710
North East & Yorkshire	711
North West & Yorkshire	712
South East & Wessex	713
South West & Wessex	714
Wales	715
Scotland	716
Ireland	717

For the latest AA traffic and road conditions, 24 hours a day, dial 0838 401 followed by the appropriate code.

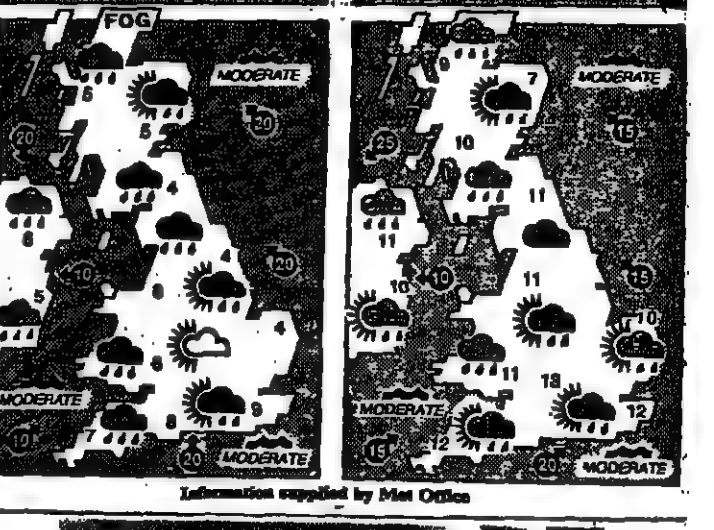
Region	Forecast
London & SE	721
C London (within N & S)	722
M4/M25/M1/M3	723
M6/M1/M25/M1	724
M6/M1/M25/M1	725
M6/M1/M25/M1	726

Early rain over northern Scotland, clearing gradually.
Much of central and southern Scotland, Northern Ireland and western England and Wales will be cloudy with rain, changing to showers later. More broken cloud elsewhere with sunshine and showers. Mild everywhere. Outlook: showers and sunny spells; more rain later.

Area	Forecast
London	727
SE London	728
SW London	729
Central London	730
North London	731
South London	732
East London	733
West London	734
South East	735
South West	736
Wales	737
Scotland	738
Ireland	739

Area	Forecast
London	740
SE London	741
SW London	742
Central London	743
North London	744
South London	745
East London	746
West London	747
South East	748
South West	749
Wales	750
Scotland	751
Ireland	752

Area	Forecast
London	753
SE London	754
SW London	755
Central London	756
North London	757
South London	758
East London	759
West London	760
South East	761
South West	762
Wales	763
Scotland	764
Ireland	765



PLEASE DON'T TURN A BLIND EYE

Children like this desperately need your help. Being blind is a severe handicap, wherever you live. But when it's in a poor community without access to proper medical care, education, or training, the future holds no promise. Our Sight Savers projects restore sight to over 250,000 needlessly blind people every year, working in over 40 developing countries. We help all sorts of people to see again - babies, young people, adults, the elderly. Often they need just a simple cataract operation that costs only £8. An Asian Eye Camp can treat hundreds of people for £240. And £400 will run one of our African Mobile Eye Units for a month. We also help the permanently blind through education and training programmes.

To carry on this vital work, we need your help. Won't you spare a few pounds to help those who are urgently in need?

SIGHT SAVERS
ROYAL COMMONWEALTH SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

P.O. Box 151, Weymouth Heath, West Sussex BN25 4TF
Telephone: (0444) 612424 Registered Charity Number: 207544

YES, I WOULD LIKE TO HELP YOUR SIGHT SAVERS PROJECTS.

(Please tick box) ☐ Please send me more information ☐ I enclose a donation of £

If you wish to make your donation by Access or Visa card please send card number. My card is ACCESS/VISA (delete which is not applicable)

Card expiry date: _____ Cardholder's Signature: _____

Name Mr/Ms/Ms: _____ Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Send to: Sight Savers, Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, P.O. Box 151, Weymouth Heath, West Sussex BN25 4TF

BUSINESS

SATURDAY MARCH 9 1991

Credit cards offer last-ditch hope to stranded travellers

By SARA MCCONNELL

SCHEDULED Air Europe travellers stranded when the airline went into administration yesterday should be able to get their money back if they bought their ticket direct from the airline with a credit card.

But the position is less clear cut for travellers who bought their ticket through a travel agent. Under the Consumer Credit Act, cardholders can claim on their card for goods or services worth between £100 and £10,000 that the retailer or merchant failed to provide. Passengers who booked their flights directly with Air Europe and whose flights were cancelled should have no trouble establishing that Air Europe had not fulfilled its contract. However, banks

admit that buying a ticket through a travel agent on an airline that subsequently suspends flights is a grey area under the Consumer Credit Act because technically the cardholder's contract is with the travel agent, not the airline. Banks interpret the act differently and some may not pay out.

Barclaycard said it would be making no difference between claims from cardholders who bought direct and those who bought through a travel agent. A spokeswoman said: "If a flight wasn't provided this morning and cardholders should have flown but haven't, they should claim if they bought the ticket with a Barclaycard. We will make no difference between direct tickets and those bought through a travel agent. They should write to the address at the top of the statement." Lloyds, National

Westminster and Midland, which operate Access cards, confirmed that holders who had booked direct would be covered.

Midland said there would be no difference between cardholders who had bought through a travel agent and those who had bought direct, and suggested people started putting claims through.

A Lloyds spokeswoman said: "If a cardholder has booked direct, customers should be entitled to a refund under section 75 of the Consumer Credit Act. But if customers bought through a travel agent, the contract would technically be between the customer and the travel agent. We would look at cases on their merits." She added: "Claiming on a card should be the last resort. If Air Europe does go into receivership, which it has not yet done,

people should first approach the receivers. Like all insurance we ask people to check if they are covered elsewhere."

NatWest said people who bought through travel agents should approach them first. "The customer would need to satisfy the bank that the good or service was not provided because the contract is between the cardholder and the agent," it said.

If travel agents are members of the Association of British Travel Agents (Abta), their customers should be covered by an Abta bond, an indemnity policy that would pay out if travellers claimed against a member. Abta said that most travel insurance policies would not cover the collapse of a scheduled airline.

"If people are booked on a scheduled

airline, they will have to rebook on another airline, pay again and claim back if the airline continues running," said an Abta spokesman. "As far as we know the only insurance policy which will pay out if a scheduled airline goes bust is the Travelguard Gold policy from Accident & General, our accredited travel insurer." He said travellers may be covered if they bought their ticket with a credit card.

About 25,000 people are away on package tours with ILG, Air Europe's parent company, with a further several hundred thousand booked to travel in the next few weeks. These tours are still running and include Intasun, Global and Club 18-30 holidays. These people on charter flights are protected by an Abta bond of £60 million.

MONEY

Oil 'may plunge to \$12'

WORLD crude oil prices could plunge to \$12 a barrel from their present levels of about \$20, according to Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, the former Saudi Arabian oil minister.

Prices depended on how quickly Iraq's production was resumed and on how soon Kuwait's damaged oilfields could be repaired, he said.

The sheikh was speaking before Monday's meeting of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries in Geneva. Page 24

Prize fighter



Sir Christopher Hogg, who turned the ailing Courtlands group into one of the success stories of the decade, has collected surprisingly few enemies in a lifetime of glittering prizes. But as he admitted to Gillian Bowditch, the army showed up some of the flaws in his leadership skills. Page 25

US jobless up

Unemployment in America rose to its highest level in four years last month, reaching 6.5 per cent of the workforce, up from 6.2 per cent. Page 24

Shares stall

A late bout of profit taking ended a further attempt to breach the stock market's all-time high. The FT-SE 100 index finally closed 17.3 up at 2,455.08. Page 26

Tax scrutiny

The black economy is coming under increasing scrutiny by the Inland Revenue, which has stepped up its efforts to recover unpaid tax. Page 29

Cash stash

Putting away extra money against retirement is an excellent idea, but not necessarily in the form of additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) paid into company pension schemes. Page 30

Your letters



A reader who cut up a Barclaycard and demanded the return of the £8 annual charge is bemused to discover the amount has been returned in the form of a credit balance on the now unusable card. Page 32

Sex quiz

Life assurance applicants may soon have to answer questions about their sexual behaviour, whatever their sexual orientation, after a rise in Aids among heterosexuals. Page 31

Minor cards

Lloyds Bank has joined the move by the clearing banks to supply cheque guarantee cards to 16 year olds, giving minors the means to run up a potential £1,500 debt that is not legally recoverable. Page 33

Carlton may head TV-am franchise bid

By MELINDA WITSTOCK, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

CARLTON Communications is believed to have linked with Independent Television News, The Daily Telegraph and NBC, the American television network, to bid for TV-am's national breakfast television franchise.

Carlton, headed by Michael Green, is thought to have set its sights on a bid for the Thames Television franchise while putting in a "second-choice" bid for TVS Entertainment. Carlton would be restricted to a 20 per cent stake in the TV-am franchise under government ownership restrictions if it succeeded with a bid for either Thames or TVS.

Under non-European Community and cross-media ownership rules, The Daily Telegraph and NBC would also be restricted to 20 per cent each.

It is not clear whether ITN plans to take an equity stake in the venture. Given the high costs of moving to a new building and covering the Gulf war, it may simply be contracted to supply the news for the breakfast franchise.

The consortium would have to find other investors to bid for the TV-am licence, unless Carlton drops plans to bid for a Channel 3 franchise.

Bob Phillips, chief executive of ITN and former managing director of Carlton, said yesterday he could not comment until next week. Before taking over at ITN, Mr Phillips was in charge of developing Carlton's Channel 3 bid plans.

A Carlton spokesman would not comment on any plans to target TV-am, adding that the company would not

confirm any deals until the May 15 application deadline. The Daily Telegraph will make an announcement about its bid plans in ten days.

TV-am is regarded as one of the most vulnerable ITV incumbents, given its immense profitability. Some believe that newcomers would also find it easier to pass the so-called "quality threshold" with a bid for TV-am rather than a larger ITV company.

One prominent broadcaster and media consultant not linked to the consortium said: "ITN, Carlton, the Telegraph and NBC could walk all over TV-am in terms of quality. It is also far easier for the ITC [Independent Television Commission] to allow the breakfast franchise to change hands. There is no contribution to the ITV network to worry about."

The Really Useful Group, which said last year that it was interested in the TV-am franchise, announced last week

that it would not bid for any ITV company.

MAI Broadcasting, the consortium put together by Michael Palin, the actor, and Roger Laughton, former BBC co-productions director, would not rule out a bid for TV-am.

HALE & Pace, the comedy duo, have been "golden hand-cuffed" to London Weekend Television, the producer of their last three television series.

LWT has secured the loyalty of many of its top presenters and stars, including Melvyn Bragg, Cilla Black and Brian Walden, with contracts running until 1995 to ensure it passes the "quality threshold" in the Channel 3 licence tender.

Gareth Hale and Norman Pace yesterday signed a three-year exclusive contract worth £500,000.

The "golden handcuffs", worth millions of pounds in total, are to keep leading names from being poached by rival bidders before and after LWT's bid to renew its franchise.

Melvyn Bragg was one of 44 LWT executives and managers locked into the group a year ago with the introduction of a bonus and share incentive scheme. The scheme would leave the executives with 14.7 per cent of the company if performance targets are met by 1993.

Providing LWT wins its franchise, the scheme is certain to make millionaires of Mr Bragg, Greg Dyke, LWT's chief executive, and Christopher Bland, the chairman, among others.



Green: 'four-way link up'

Power shares ballot likely

By ROSE TIDMAN, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

GOVERNMENT advisers to the flotation of the electricity generating companies meet this morning to discuss scaling down allocations to the 1.93 million investors who applied for shares.

A limited ballot is likely to be adopted for those who failed to pre-register with the share information office. The retail offer was five times subscribed, with £3.13 billion chasing the shares on offer.

Japanese institutions were expected to have bid aggressively in the "back end" tender offer, under which 16 per cent of shares conditionally placed were re-offered to institutions pre-

pared to pay the highest price. Japanese groups may emerge as owners of more than 20 per cent of the issue. Their enthusiasm is expected to help push the shares to a premium when trading starts at 2.30pm on Tuesday.

Yesterday, 100p part-paid PowerGen shares were quoted at 126p, and National Power shares at 119p when IG Index, the financial bookmaker, closed its grey market book, ahead of the tender bids.

Extra shares, provisionally allocated to institutions, have now been earmarked for retail investors under the clawback procedure. Even so, the retail offer remains three times sub-

scribed. Investors who pre-registered for shares are likely to be favoured in the allocation arrangements over last-minute applicants who may simply be seeking to snag the issue and sell early for a quick profit.

Private investors who registered and applied for the minimum package of 300 shares in the two companies are likely to receive all the shares they sought.

Early indications were that even those who applied for up to 2,000 shares may escape any scaling down. However, applicants for larger volumes could face a sharp scaling back, or a ballot.

Battle for Grattan intensifies

Sears tops £151m German offer

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

TWO new bids for Grattan, the mail order arm of Next, came in rapid succession yesterday as the auction for the business became more intense. Otto-Versand, the German mail order group, offered £151 million for Grattan early in the morning but that was soon exceeded by Sears with a £155 million figure.

Next has strongly recommended the Otto offer but the recommendation came before Sears had offered £4 million more. However, David Jones, chief executive of Next, made it clear he had a better relationship with Otto than with Sears. In a circular to shareholders Next says the Otto offer is more attractive in qualitative terms.

"The board believes that the commercial relationship between Next and Otto-Versand will have important continuing benefits for Next, which Sears, as a direct competitor of Next, would be unlikely to

provide over the long term. The board also considers that the position of the staff of Grattan will be more secure in the event that Otto-Versand acquires Grattan," the document says.

If there are no further bids for Grattan, an increased offer from Otto to match or exceed the Sears offer cannot be ruled out, shareholders will have to choose between the two offers. There is an extraordinary general meeting on Wednesday to approve the Otto offer and proxy votes have to be in by noon on Monday.

Geoffrey Maitland Smith, chairman of Sears, which owns Freemans, the mail order company, said he would be writing again to Next shareholders with news of Sears' increased offer.

"Our offer is worth £4 million more to Next than Otto's and Next has told its shareholders about the difficult financial position it is in and the estimated level of losses. We are strongly urging Next

shareholders to vote against the Otto resolution on March 13.

"The £155 million offer from Sears lapses if the resolution to approve Otto's offer is voted through but our original £150 million offer stays open until March 28," he said.

Next says in its circular that the Otto offer is conditional on clearance by the European Commission. If this condition is not met before March 26 the conditional agreement from Otto will be rescinded, which would allow Next to accept the £150 million offer from Sears.

Sears has been in touch with Next's institutional shareholders, many of whom also hold Sears' shares. Excluding Otto, the top 50 per cent of Next's shareholders are believed to have roughly four times as much invested in Sears as they have in Next.

They may be keen to see Grattan fall to Sears to strengthen Sears' position in the mail order market.



Not taken for a ride: a member of Air Europe's ground staff hands back an air ticket to a would-be traveller

Lenders send ILG into collapse

By ANGELA MACKAY

INTERNATIONAL Leisure Group, Britain's second biggest travel company, was forced into administration after a syndicate of lenders led by Citibank called in the receiver to two of the company's aircraft leasing subsidiaries.

The move was precipitated by ILG's failure to raise about \$45 million needed to fund the group until the end of May, when summer holiday income would boost cash inflow.

Lloyds, the company's main bank, had offered to lend a further £25 million as long as ILG, headed by Harry Goodman, could find a similar amount. When the company failed to find the new cash late on Thursday, Citibank, which leads a syndicate of 14 banks, called in Ernst & Young as administrative receiver to two of ILG's subsidiaries, AE Finance and AE Norse.

ILG called in KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock, which was appointed yesterday by the High Court to five ILG companies.

The Citibank syndicate leases two aircraft, worth about £200 million, to Air Europe, ILG's airline subsidiary. Air Europe flights were suspended yesterday.

ILG's dilemma occurred despite a £40 million cash injection last week from Werner Key, the Swiss financier who in turn took a 49 per cent stake in the company. Mr Key's parent company, Omni Holdings, called in a receiver on Wednesday, adding to the dwindling confidence in ILG's ability to survive in the long

term. Tim Hayward, of Peat Marwick, said ILG had gross liabilities of £480 million at the end of October last year, but he had not had time to estimate current debt.

Mr Hayward added that ILG had lost £56 million in the past three months and that the £40 million invested by Omni had been spent "almost immediately" after it arrived in the United Kingdom.

Mr Hayward said there had been several enquiries about buying Air Europe and Intasun, ILG's main subsid-

aries. He added that Intasun was a profitable company.

Dan Air, Air Europe's main rival, had approached ILG to buy Air Europe, but talks broke down. Yesterday, shares in Davies and Newman, Dan Air's owner rose 40p to 155p after news of ILG's collapse.

Executives at Pan Am failed to gain any deadline extension on a multi-million loan due to be repaid by midnight New York time last night. Failure to pay could ground the airline and force it into liquidation (Philip

Robinson writes from New York). Talks for an extension to the deadline started on Thursday, but sources said yesterday that none had been granted.

Pan Am is due to repay up to \$100 million to Bankers Trust and \$50 million to United Airlines. This was to have come from the sale of Pan Am's London routes and its operations at Heathrow to United Airlines. British permission for which has not been granted.

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RA/TT/07

Reluctant hero keeps emotions in check

BUSINESS PROFILE
By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

Sir Christopher Hogg

Sir Christopher Hogg is the closest thing the cynical world of business has to a hero. Intimidatingly intelligent, scrupulously fair-minded, logical in the extreme, he has an unbroken record of achievement. Some of his friends secretly suspect he may be a visitor from the planet Vulcan. Cut him and he does not bleed.

Sir Christopher, chairman of Courtaulds and non-executive chairman of Reuters, is universally respected. And not only for the changes he has wrought at Courtaulds, the industrial group that merged its textile and chemical divisions a year ago and which, prior to his chairmanship, was one of the sickest businesses in Britain. Under him, it became a textbook success story.

Those who know Sir Christopher well talk in an almost reverential fashion about his single-mindedness, his fairness and his loyalty. Lord Keston, the industrialist who brought him into Courtaulds and who put him on the board at the age of 37, says he is one of the most remarkable men he has ever met.

"Chris did a number of jobs when he joined Courtaulds and he did them all with brilliance. He has remarkable brainpower. He is probably the most cerebral chairman in the whole of British industry," he says.

The words that come to mind when Sir David Scholey, chairman of SG Warburg, the merchant bank, thinks of Sir Christopher are "intelligence, integrity and thoroughness". He adds: "He is a challenging man, but one who brings out the best in people. The world would be a better place if there were more men like him."

Glen Renfrew, the outgoing chief executive of Reuters, says the head of Courtaulds is "an extremely rare blend of affability and firmness".

Sir Christopher, aged 54, has few enemies, which is surprising given his meteoric rise and the fact that under his rule Courtaulds' workforce has halved. At one time he held the record for having fired more people than any other company, with the exception of British Steel and British Leyland.

But while there are many who will attest to his logic, there are few who have seen him express any emotion. He describes himself as "a cold fish" and those who know him describe him as having nerves of steel. He is controlled to an almost unnatural extent. Privately, they question whether his clinical exterior masks any insecurities.

"I'm just too damn serious, that's my problem," says Sir Christopher. "That's the key to the whole thing. I look at myself now and I think 'my God you're serious', which is not only boring for everyone else, it's boring for me too."

The urge to see him as a stereotype is difficult to resist. Educated at Marlborough College and Trinity College, Oxford, where he attained a first class honours degree in

English, he went on to Harvard University in America and gained an MBA with high distinction.

He has a wife who was an Oxford don and two daughters who are described by his friends as "bright, beautiful and talented".

From an early age Sir Christopher was marked out for high office: the automatic choice as the man most likely to succeed the perfect product of the establishment.

But beneath the controlled exterior it is possible to ascertain a degree of anguish. He argues with himself out loud, rationalising his emotions. Ask what he feels about a subject and he gives an eloquent, thought-out response. Ask for a gut reaction and there is silence.

Sir Christopher describes his childhood as fortunate, but he was not a happy, carefree boy. He was born into a middle class family, the second child of four. His father, Anthony Hogg, ran the family business, Samuel French, a theatrical publisher. Apart from his grandmother, he was the only member of his family to go to university.

He remains close to both his parents. "They delegated the management of my life to me from a young age," he says. "They provided a supportive umbrella under which I could do things, especially when I was young. I would say about them now what I hope some of Courtaulds' subsidiary managers would say about the Courtaulds parent."

He was sent to boarding school at the age of seven and a half and went on to Marlborough, somewhat predictably becoming headboy. "I was a boringly good school-



Captain of industry: Sir Christopher, chairman of Courtaulds, in his office, with a tapestry depicting the view from his Welsh cottage

my whole life doing things that are put in front of me. I was very much affected by it. Once you've seen how thin the veneer of civilisation actually is, you never forget it.

"If your government puts a weapon in your hands and tells you to get on and kill, you do so, especially if it's a question of your own life or someone else's. You do so with a good deal of primitive abandon."

To hear him say that the army taught him he was not a

as the single biggest piece of good fortune in his working life. At Harvard he felt he was firing on all cylinders and going in a sensible direction. He was able to shake off the strait-jacket of his English institutional life, and for the first time he was not automatically top of the class. He started to enjoy life.

After a year teaching at IMEDE, a business school in Lausanne, Switzerland, he joined the merchant bank that was the predecessor to Hill Samuel, where he learnt not to be frightened by large sums of money. "It taught me about the City and the view they have in the City that they are at the centre of the earth. I sympathise with that. They're not right but I understand it."

On secondment from Hill Samuel, Sir Christopher joined the Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, a body set up by the then Labour government. It was there he met Frank, now Lord Keston, who became his mentor and, as chairman of Courtaulds, offered him a job.

Courtaulds was a large company in a sick industry and Sir Christopher admits to being frustrated by what he perceived as the obvious difficulties. "I could see we were in an enormous mess. I thought the situation was more serious than my colleagues, but I don't want to pretend that I was a voice in the wilderness because I wasn't." His colleagues made him chief executive in 1979 and chairman by the end of that year.

It was an appalling time for the group. Between 1980 and 1984, 50,000 employees, half the workforce, lost their jobs. Today, Courtaulds is worth £1.43 billion on the stock market, and the textile company is valued at £285 million.

Lord Keston says that despite Sir Christopher's emotionally reticent facade, he is not without compassion. "He's not a back-slapping, arm-squeezing sort of chap but the job cuts affected him

profoundly." At that stage, Sir Christopher did not enjoy working for weeks at a time. "It's not much fun being part of an ailing company."

Personal doubt was not far away. "If ever I was promoted out of my depth it was probably in this present job. I have thought, 'what the hell am I doing this for and can I ever make any real progress?' I don't get these sorts of moments now, but in the early days what I ought to do next was so unclear. That's always the real problem. Any fool can see where you should be in five years' time. It's getting there that's the problem; the next step."

Sir Christopher describes himself as a loner who is not very good at the fun side of life. Friends find him difficult to get close to. "I like the security of groups, the dynamics of groups and what groups can achieve, but I think I'm something of a loner," he says. His outside interests tend to

be solitary pursuits, such as skiing, hill walking and reading. To relax he works flat out at something else.

He admits to being both ambitious and competitive, although not to the extent of stepping over other people's corpses. "I may be fooling myself on that," he says. But dead bodies have not exactly littered his path. Colleagues are most protective.

The time may soon arrive for a move after ten years as chairman of Courtaulds. Recently, he has been mooted as a possible successor to Lord Weinstock at GEC. A senior role in education is also a possibility.

There is a degree of perversity in his character. He takes pleasure not only in the success of the demerger of Courtaulds Textiles from Courtaulds but also in the fact that the endeavour went against the grain. Chairmen are expected to expand, not contract the business. His strengths are legion and often listed. Vulnerabilities are less

obvious. "I don't think in terms of weaknesses but I certainly allow for them in terms of the people I have around me."

Sir Christopher's office is unprepossessing, with the name Chris Hogg on the door and no reference to his position. The décor is sparse but features a tapestry depicting the view from his cottage in the Upper Wye Valley, Wales.

He goes out of his way not to intimidate those around him, right down to the woolen tank tops he wears, but people do find him daunting. And they put him on an elevated moral plane.

He is an uneasy hero. "People want to believe in heroes," he says. "If people know what a shambles the world was in and how imperfect the people who run it are, there would be more suicides than there are now. People want to believe that those who run their organisations are good and infallible, but they're ruddy well not. I'm under no illusions about that."

Anglia aborts power station

By ROSS TILMAN
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

ANGLIA Energy has abandoned plans to build a 380-megawatt power station at Great Yarmouth after last week's announcement by British Gas of a 35 per cent rise in gas prices for bulk users.

Ranger Oil UK, head of the the Anglia Energy consortium, said the rise in gas prices made the project uneconomic.

The decision confirms fears that a shortfall in the supply of gas until 1995 will hamper the development of competition in the power generation market, one of the main aims of the government's electricity privatisation programme.

Ranger and its partners, PowerGen, Amerasia Hess, Conoco and Elf UK, had planned to obtain fuel from British Gas and the Anglia gas field off the Norfolk coast.

The Anglia field, being developed by Ranger, Amerasia Hess, Conoco Developments and Elf UK, contains 235 million cubic feet of reserves. Phil Irwin, a Ranger director, said: "We are disappointed that the project is not going ahead, but it gives us opportunities on the field side."

Ranger believes the shortfall of supplies from the Britain's continental shelf will enable it to realise higher prices for its gas. From the producer's point of view, Mr Irwin said that the outlook for gas prices was "substantially better than it was six months or a year ago".

Anglia Energy's planned power station, which would have used highly efficient combined-cycle gas-fired technology, was scheduled to have begun generating at the end of 1993. Mr Irwin said Anglia had held talks with British Gas after receiving seven days' warning of last week's price rise. However, it was unable to complete contracts in time.

Three other power projects, signed contracts with British Gas before the price rise. Ofgas, the regulatory body, issued enforcement notices requiring British Gas to complete deals with two more, but British Gas has refused to do so.

Talks over more than 60 power station projects had been held with British Gas. Little more than a dozen are likely to proceed.

'I'm just too damn serious, I look at myself and I think "my God you're serious" which is not only boring for everyone else, it's boring for me too'

boy. I worked according to the system and I did most of the things of which the system approved.

"If you are an instinctively law-abiding little boy, as I was, you just become shaped by the institution. You soak up its values. I can recognise that I'm the creature of my schooling and I can recognise there are some values of those schools that were out of keeping with many of the things I've had to spend my life thinking about or doing."

Despite sounding angry at his easy acceptance of his early life, he has never really rebelled. "I wouldn't have seen the point. I haven't got the Gorbals instinct."

Sir Christopher began to suspect the world was not quite as he had been led to believe after joining the army at the age of 20. His national service was dangerous and included parachuting into Port Said during the Suez crisis.

"I spent a lot of that time being very frightened, but I just got through it. I've spent

good leader comes as a surprise. This, after all, is the man who is the headhunters' first port of call for any vacant top office. "I might be able to lead in a public school context but I wasn't very good as a platoon commander leading different kinds of men under different sorts of circumstances. That was one of the most valuable things the army taught me. I probably thought I could do almost anything. The army taught me that I certainly couldn't."

After six months in Canada, he went to Oxford, where he developed some skill with a punt and where, in his final year, he met his wife, Anne. She was studying Spanish and French and was a friend of his flatmate.

By the time he had finished at Oxford Sir Christopher knew he wanted to go into industry, an un fashionable ambition for an English graduate.

Sir Christopher won a Harkness Fellowship to Harvard. He describes this award

Arlington plunges to £19m loss

By MATTHEW BOND

THE commercial property slump has resulted in Arlington Securities reporting a pre-tax loss of £19 million for the year to end-December. In 1989, the company made pre-tax profits of £30.5 million.

Arlington has been a wholly owned subsidiary of British Aerospace since July 1989, when BAE took it over in an agreed deal, valuing it at £278 million. The company still reports its results independently because of an outstanding preference share issue.

BAE bought Arlington primarily to exploit the property development opportunities from BAE's surplus properties, and from its acquisitions of Rover and Royal Ordnance. But the company's management retains an independent style.

Last December, Arlington announced it was to participate in a property "vulture" fund, a vehicle set up to exploit the slump in property prices. Arlington's founder partners are Electra Kingsway and General Electric Investment of America. Other institutions will be invited to subscribe for up to £230 million of equity in the fund, expected to be officially launched next week.

Aitch Holdings dives to £782,000 loss

AITCH Holdings, the diversified fashion group, has dived into the red after exceptional losses and higher interest costs. The company made a pre-tax loss of £782,000 in the year to end-November, against a profit of £32,000 last time. Turnover climbed from £40.1 million to £43.7 million. There is a 1.4p loss per share and again no dividend.

There were exceptional costs of £818,000 from the reorganisation of Ben Sherman, the shirts business acquired when Aitch Group reversed into the old Muntion Group in 1989. The shares were unchanged at 8½p.

Doeflex edges to £1.28m

DOEFLEX, the plastic materials maker, lifted pre-tax profits from £1.26 million to £1.28 million in the year to end-December. Turnover was static at £18.1 million. Earnings per share edged up from 10.18p to 10.21p. The final dividend is held at 2.7p, making an unchanged total of 4.02p for the year.

Cray disposal reaps £2.08m

CRAY Electronics Holdings, the electronic equipment manufacturer, is selling its loss-making Lloyd Instruments subsidiary to Technitrol, an American instrumentation company, for £2.08 million. The total consideration includes £230,000 to write off Lloyd Instruments' bank overdraft.

Crédit Suisse slides

CRÉDIT Suisse, the Swiss bank, suffered a 31.2 per cent decline in income in 1990 because of a downturn in securities trading. Consolidated net profits fell to SwFr539 million (£212 million) last year, against SwFr783 million.

The bank - one of five to enjoy a universal triple-A credit rating - also cut its dividends from SwFr115 to SwFr100 for registered bearer shares, and from SwFr23 to SwFr20 for registered shares. Bearer shares in CS Holdings, the parent company, fell in Zurich to SwFr1,760, down from SwFr1,795.

Suspension at Dunton before issue

By COLIN CAMPBELL

SHARES in Dunton Group were temporarily suspended at 9½p yesterday ahead of reorganisation proposals.

Dunton, the brickmaker and property group, plans to issue 27.3 million shares to buy Holywell, the commercial property investment company, for £1.64 million.

The share allotment gives Holywell's vendors a 57.2 per cent stake in Dunton, though the takeover panel has waived the obligation to make a general offer to all Dunton shareholders.

The acquisition will bring Dunton 11 commercial properties valued at £1.95 million, strengthening the company's asset backing and allowing continued support by its commercial bankers.

Dunton reports a £2.77 million pre-tax loss for the six months ended November compared with a previous £366,000 interim profit. Current trading remains difficult. The interim dividend has been passed (against 0.48p a share paid previously).

Dunton says the company's future depends entirely on the acquisition of Holywell.

Trading in Dunton shares is expected to resume on Monday.

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WALL STREET

New York
BLUE chips were firm at mid-morning after losing part of their opening rises as investors consolidated the market's gains. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 11 points

to 2,974.37 after climbing to about 2,989. Bruce Birtles, a market strategist at JC Bradford & Co, said it was likely that blue chips would move above the 3,000 mark next week. (Reuters)

TOKYO

Futures boost turnover

Tokyo

SHARES ended at their highest close so far this year after March futures and options settlements dominated dealings, boosting turnover. The Nikkei index closed 209.56 points, or 0.79 per cent, up at 26,607.52 with volume reaching 850 million shares.

Brokers said that the market was relieved that prices proved to be so resilient in the face of volatility caused by settlement-related orders.

After opening cautiously because of the March settlements, the market was flooded with index-linked orders. Volume climbed to 450 million shares in the first hour.

Some brokers estimated that 200 million to 300 million of the shares traded were settlement-linked. The main rises were the communications, broking, non-life insurance, electrical, warehouse, paper/pulp, rubber, machinery, oil and shipping sectors.

Declining issues were led by the credit/lease, railway/bus, trucking, retail, mining, textile, precision instruments, and non-ferrous metal sectors.

© Frankfurt — Shares held on to gains to close broadly higher, pushing the Dax index above the psychologically important 1,600 level. The Dax ended 21.83 points, or 1.4 per cent, higher at 1,602.29.

● **Sydney**—The market edged up to its highest close for the year and brokers continued to be optimistic about further rises. The All-Ordinaries index ended 3.6 points up at 1,415.2.

● **Hong Kong** — Prices ended slightly weaker as late but weighty bargain hunting failed to wholly offset morning profit taking. The Hang Seng index eased 5.05 points to 3,653.19. The broader-based Hong Kong index slid 3.04 points to 2,396.68.

● Singapore — Shares closed mostly higher in the broader market after a day of active trading saw bargain hunting alternating with profit taking. But the Straits Times industrial index still closed 6.34 points down at 1,506.23.

THE past six months have been a bad dream for British Airways. The oil price spike compounded recession and the Gulf war left airline seats empty. On the stock market, BA shares have woken from this bad dream; they leapt from a low at about the 1987 issue price of 125p to yesterday's 170p in six weeks. BA, however, is still sweating

The financial year ending in three weeks' time is a write-off. The figures are largely academic, since pre-agreed sales of aircraft will flatter them, while BA will throw a heap of exceptional redundancy costs into a hole created by winter trading losses. Richard Hannah, of UBS Phillips & Drew, suggests the upshot might be £150 million pre-tax, for earnings of about 11p per share net of asset sales and provisions.

The main question about 1990-91 is whether BA will leave its dividend at 8.85p per share, which seems likely. The balance sheet will also suffer from the drain of cash and the slump in aircraft values. Failures of firms such as Air Europe will have more impact on the market for aircraft than that for airline seats.

The Gulf war will also depress the industry's 1991-92 trading. Seats on summer flights have been sold cheaply and new aircraft will arrive at the wrong time. Traffic takes time to recover fully and many carriers used the Gulf war as an excuse to trade down and cut travel costs.

With little to come from aircraft sales next year, Mr Hannah has pencilled in pre-tax profits of only £130 million. That would leave BA shares on a challenging recovery rating of more than 14 times 1991-92 earnings with a yield of 6.9 per cent, provided the dividend is held again. Buyers looking at BA's immensely strong international route network and its relative financial strength see that this will not be a mere rebuke.

Further ahead, BA will face more formidable competition on the Atlantic routes. United Airlines and American Airlines have a trading advantage from their American networks, which are doubly protected from foreign competition.

TEMPUS

BA spots a gap in the clouds



In lower gear: Richard Allan, chairman of Perry Group (left) and Tom Cowles

and from foreign carriers penetrating the internal market. BA's profits still depend on the Atlantic. The group, however, has European plans. Brussels will surely counter continued American protection and, should Heathrow slots become marketable, BA's balance sheet would be transformed.

Motor dealers

IT WAS difficult at first glance yesterday to understand how Quicks Group and Perry Group, fellow motor dealers, could contrive such contrasting statements. While Quicks was giving warning of a slide into losses in 1990, Perry was, announcing, market-pleasing, pre-tax profits of £4 million for last year.

At the trading level the two companies are facing similarly unfriendly conditions. At Perry, £1 million of the reported profit came from property sales, and of the £3 million profit on trading, £2.2 million was earned in the first half with only £800,000

However, at Quicks the problems appear to have been compounded as the group ran into "management and accounting problems" at its Coventry Rover franchise.

Indeed, the real difference between the two lies perhaps in the quality of the management and the state of the balance sheets. Perry, with 24 per cent gearing, should see out the downturn comfortably, in contrast, Quicks had gearing of 70 per cent at its last year end and interest charges of £2.1 million against £6.3 million of trading profits.

Balance sheets hold the key to rating companies in this sector because motor dealers traditionally carry heavy gearing to finance their contract hire operations.

From a sector multiple of between seven and eight, motor dealers' shares have soared in the past month as interest rates began to fall. Tom Cowie, the chairman of T Cowie, which reported its 1990 fi-

ures this month has said that every 1 per cent fall in rates feeds directly through to £2.4 million of additional profit on the bottom line.

With consumer confidence and sales expected to increase in the second half and many smaller unquoted operators going into receivership, some investors are now looking to the sector for recovery. Cowie and Lex appear the best buys if only because of the liquidity of the share.

Among the smaller stocks, Perry, with its low gearing and strong management is among the more reliable. However, forecast 1991 profits of £2.5 to £3 million leave the shares on a far from cheap rating of 11 to 15 — although this falls to 8 times in 1992.

Racal Telecom

On any reading of the white paper, however, Racial Telecom, which owns Vodafone, becomes more rather than less open to takeover.

Racal Telecom has been in bid proof since its stock market debut in 1988 because Racal Electronics, its former parent company, kept 80 per cent of the shares. That decision was hotly debated at the time and became the subject of a proxy battle started by Millicom, an American cellular telephone company with a valuable stake in Racal. Millicom argued that RE investors should be able to "maximize" the value of their Racal Telecom shares by retaining 80 per cent and floating off the rest. This has proved to be the case. The market has often implied a negative value to the substantial stake held by RE. Now RE as calculated by stripping out the market value of the Racal Telecom holding.

Late last year, RE opted for a three-way split to end the discount. Demerging Racial Telecom will make the company a bid target for the first time, but the trade department, which awarded the cellular phone licence, has the right to object if more than 25 per cent changes hands. The duopoly review makes trade department opposition to a bid, even from an overseas candidate, unlikely. The main criterion in the white paper will be the likelihood of increased competition.

Long-term players in cellular telephony are likely to view Racial Telecom shares as good value in the current depressed climate. But margins are improving despite a slower growth rate, Racial Telecom's other businesses are eliminating losses and there is a chance of further foreign franchise

Profits to March will show a rise of about 45 per cent to £240 million, although disposals could push the reported figure. About £275 million is on the cards for the current year and analysts are penciling in £320 million for the following trading period. At 345p, Racal Telecom shares are a buy.

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Japan's housewives hold purse strings

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A budget for borrowers?

Home owners faced a difficult year in 1990: high interest rates and rising unemployment have affected lenders and borrowers alike. However, the outlook is not all bad — cuts in mortgage rates were announced on February 27, and at least one further cut is likely before the summer, leading to increased activity in the housing market.

Perhaps the worst news has been the number of people who are behind with their payments or who have lost their homes as a result. According to the Council of Mortgage Lenders, the number of dwellings taken into possession rose to 43,890 last year, compared with 15,810 in 1989. This figure represents 0.47 per cent of all loans outstanding. The number six to 12 months in arrears rose to 123,110 (1.31 per cent of the total) at the end of December, compared with 87,790 at the end of June.

These figures indicate a heart-breaking situation for many individual borrowers, and most

lenders are sympathetic to people with genuine repayment difficulties. But how can the Chancellor help matters in his forthcoming Budget? There are steps that the government could take to ease home buyers' difficulties. Miras, mortgage interest relief at source, has been much in the news of late.

A survey conducted by *The Times* in January showed that higher Miras was the concession that people most wanted to see in the Budget. Miras already costs the government £8 billion a year and it has been suggested that the tax system favours borrowers to the detriment of savers.

The introduction of tax exempt special savings accounts (Tessas) and the increasing of personal equity plan (PEP) levels have helped to correct this imbalance. But if we look at the origins of Miras and what it was



COMMENT

PETER BIRCH

intended to achieve, it becomes clear that it is no longer the bonus to home buyers that it was. Originally, tax relief was available for the full amount of the loan, but this was restricted to £25,000 in 1974. In 1983, the limit was raised to £30,000, where it has remained ever since. The aim was to encourage people to buy their own homes and make it easier for them to meet the monthly mortgage payments.

In this respect it could be said to have been successful: Britain now has 67 per cent owner-occupation. Over a number of

years, though, the increase in house prices and year-on-year inflation have negated some of Miras's value. But Miras is still important for the ordinary buyer and it is inappropriate to talk of reducing it at present, not least because of the adverse impact of interest rates that remain historically high.

Some commentators have suggested systems of reducing Miras throughout the period of a loan, or throughout the life of a borrower. Such schemes are difficult to administer and likely to lead to further distortions in

the housing market. I believe that it would be inappropriate to tamper so fundamentally with a system that has become well established and on which so many rely.

Two other issues have been raised in discussions on the Budget: capital gains tax and stamp duty. Making house sales subject to capital gains tax was the change that people least wanted, according to *The Times* survey. It is important that capital gains tax exemption be allowed to continue to ensure that ease of mobility, an important feature of a successful economy, is maintained.

The abolition of stamp duty for share transactions was announced in last year's Budget, and there is no reason why this could not be applied to homes as well. A minimum first step would be a £30,000 allowance rather than an

exemption, meaning that buyers would pay 1 per cent on the amount over £30,000 rather than 1 per cent on the total house price.

This year promises to be a better year for home owners. Abbey National and other big lenders announced cuts in their mortgage rates in February, and further reductions are expected during the year. Sustained high interest rates have helped restrain personal borrowing, and it is unlikely that we will see a return to the buying spree experienced in 1988. The Chancellor is only too aware of the need for prudence: home buyers cannot expect a windfall in the 1991 Budget. The best borrowers and lenders can hope for is a further cut in the base rate and the maintaining of concessions to homebuyers such as Miras and exemption from capital gains tax, with the hope of some reduction in the impact of stamp duty.

Peter Birch is chief executive of Abbey National.

Tax net closes on evaders

By ANNE CASORN

LAST year the Inland Revenue recovered £2.9 billion in unpaid tax, interest and penalties, the equivalent of 2p on the basic rate of income tax. The figure is enough to send a ripple of unease through Britain's black economy, which stretches from the street trader to the not-so-small businessman and fee-charging professional.

Traditionally, the fiscal population divides into two distinct camps, the taxpayer and the non-complier. But there is a third category: a member of the black economy who wants to come in from the cold, but does not know how or fears the consequences.

"From time to time we'd get little envelopes full of what we called conscience money — no name or anything," said one ex-Inland Revenue employee. "It's silly because if that person is caught they can't say they've sent any money. There's no proof."

Mike Garnett, district inspector for Eastbourne, East Sussex, says that at any one time his area might have 160 income tax accounts, 25 companies and 70 "moonlighters" or "ghosts" under investigation. Moonlighters are people with an undeclared second source of income, while ghosts have no tax records. Out of that total, about ten would be people who had come forward voluntarily.

According to Jim Hudson, who is in charge of investigations in the area, they cover a broad cross-section of the black economy. "You get antique dealers, commission agents such as double glazing salesmen, draughtsmen and architects, musicians, publicans and landlords."

Aileen Barry who works in the tax investigation support service at Price Waterhouse, the accountant, gives another example: wealthy individuals who visit Britain for business reasons and find they have

stayed long enough to become resident. "There is a steady demand for advice from people who want to legalise their tax affairs."

The category also includes businessmen seeking external finance and who therefore want their books in order, and people who want to put their affairs straight before retiring or who worry about leaving their children with a large tax bill when they die. Inland Revenue interest can be aroused when an estate turns out to be bigger than would be apparent from previous tax returns.

Celebrity tax cases can prick consciences, such as Lester Piggott's — he was jailed for tax offences — and Ken Dodd's, despite the fact he was cleared of the charges. It may just be local gossip that the Inland Revenue is investigating a particular trade, a chance remark in the pub, or even romance.

For many people the biggest problem can be lack of records. The best place to start is by hiring a reputable accountant who will treat the matter in confidence and draft a fiscal history to present to the Revenue.

"There is no formula," said Tom Murray, partner with KPMG Peat Marwick McLintock, Britain's largest accountancy practice. "You really need the assistance of someone who's prepared to spend time considering your business and finding some basis for a proposal."

"It's sometimes useful to see what the business is doing now, take a test period, keep books and then have a look at the result."

An accountant will look at, not only probable earnings, but also allowances and expenses. "If you're someone who has been understating takings year by year and disguising this, like as not you haven't been getting the appropriate tax advice," said Mr Murray.



Under scrutiny: Jim Hudson, an Inland Revenue investigation manager, with case files he is currently examining

When the case is put before the Inland Revenue it has to be evaluated and this can rely as much on personal judgment as verifying facts.

"When we come across something like this, our approach would normally be to invite the taxpayer in for a discussion," said Mr Garnett. "The tax system rests on the principle that it is only the taxpayer who is in full knowledge of his or her income."

"We normally only resort to making an estimated assessment in circumstances where we can't get hold of the taxpayer or we're not getting co-operation."

The Revenue can go back 20 years if there is evidence of fraud or neglect but it is rare for it to do so, as the cost of such an intensive investigation can outweigh any tax recouped except in the most major of cases. For the small trader or workman, two to three years would be typical. Anything more than six years would be exceptional. The Inland Revenue rarely resorts to prosecution unless there is no alternative.

How much must eventually be paid is based on three factors: the final figure of tax owed, interest on that tax, and penalties. While voluntary disclosure cannot negate the tax or interest, it can have a significant effect on any penalties.

It is sensible to pay a sum of money "on account" when first approaching the Inland Revenue, as a sign of co-operation and in order to offset the interest element in any final settlement. Prompt payment is expected once a settlement has been arrived at, usually within 30 days.

Revenue makes mistakes

By LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

BEING afraid of the Inland Revenue could cost taxpayers dearly. The Consumers' Association, which this week published the *Which? Tax-Savings Guide 1991*, gives warning that mistakes happen frequently and that taxpayers are put off too easily from having them put right.

Jo Hanks, a senior researcher, said: "People write to us because they are afraid of the Inland Revenue. They are put off by one negative letter and give up hope of getting what they want."

"We get instances where tax inspectors have got it wrong and we can quote the correct section of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act to get it sorted out," Ms Hanks said.

One couple was wrongly told that the married couple's allowance could not be transferred to the wife whereas the blind person's allowance could. However, any unused part of the married couple's allowance can be transferred to a wife by the husband. So can the blind allowance. Neil Kenworthy battled with the



Hanks: 'people are afraid'

Inland Revenue for nearly five months over tax relief on his Business Expansion Scheme (BES) investments.

He put four lots of £10,000 in assured tenancy schemes in September 1988. Because the investments were made in the first half of the tax year he applied to set £5,000 against his income tax bill for the previous year under the carry-back rule. This left him free to put £5,000 in another scheme in March 1989 and remain

within the £40,000 a year limit for tax relief.

The rule was introduced in April 1987 and Mr Kenworthy qualified because he had invested less than £35,000 in these schemes in 1987-8. Despite the advice of two accountants, it took almost five months and a letter from the Consumers' Association before he obtained the tax relief worth £2,000 on his later £5,000 investment.

In another case, the Revenue charged tax on a man's invalidity benefit, which is tax-free. His personal allowance was also £616 lower than it should have been.

When the Revenue makes a mistake in a notice of assessment, the document showing how an individual's tax bill is worked out and how much tax he or she has to pay, the taxpayer has little time to notice and have it changed. Anyone who thinks the figures are wrong has 30 days to appeal in writing.

After that time, the assessment becomes final and normally cannot be altered.

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AVCs deny employees choice in retirement

By HELEN FRIDMAN

EMPLOYEES should think twice before making additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) to their company pension schemes. Putting aside extra money for retirement while working is an excellent idea, but the type of pension available and alternative methods of saving should be studied.

In the past AVCs have been neglected, but there are signs that the take-up among employees is now growing. One reason for this is that more insurance salesmen are promoting free-standing AVCs (FSAVCs), making people more aware of their company-sponsored AVCs. The employee does not have the cost of the salesman's commission deducted from his savings as with FSAVCs.

A potential disadvantage of company-sponsored AVCs, however, is the lack of freedom to choose the benefits provided for retirement.

Many employees wrongly assume that the highest initial pension is provided by the level annuity with no dependant's pension.

Roger Key, company pensions specialist at R. Watson & Sons, the consulting actuary, said: "The legal ownership of the AVC money passes to the trustees of the pension fund and it is up to them to do what they consider to be reasonable, bearing in mind the interests of all the members."

"Practice varies from scheme to scheme and members should check into this before they start making AVCs."

"Some are quite restrictive and will simply buy the member the same or similar benefits they would get under the main scheme. Others will give members a choice of options." One recently retired employee, however, found that instead of receiving extra benefits on the lines of his main scheme, which included a pension for his wife if he died, his employer had bought him an extra pension that would never increase and had no dependant's pension.

Neil Crighton of Equitable Life, the leading insurer in the AVC market, believes that such practices are a thing of the past.

"Employees are recognising that employees need to be consulted and advised about the pension options available when they get near to retirement," he said. The main



choices are between a level or an increasing annuity, and between one that provides a dependant's pension and one that does not. The table below shows that the highest initial pension is provided by the level annuity with no dependant's pension.

An annuity escalating at 5 per cent per annum would take seven years to overtake a level annuity. Therefore, it would probably only suit those in good health where there is a family history of longevity.

But it appears that employees rarely bother to shop around for the best rates or investigate other possibilities, such as index-linked or with-profits annuities. Individual members could investigate for themselves.

Mr Crighton said: "If the member takes the initiative, I think the trustees would be hard pressed to ignore his or her wishes."

Those whose AVC contracts started before April 1987 have the option to take their AVCs as a tax-free cash lump sum. This is often the best course of action, as it means that the employer is legally obliged to

increase the main scheme benefits provided by the pension each year in line with inflation, or by 5 per cent, whichever is less.

Mr Key believes, however, that those who have not yet embarked on an AVC scheme, should consider alternative forms of tax efficient savings, such as Tessa or Peps.

He said: "Like AVCs, Tessa and Peps are free of tax as they build up. The main difference is that with AVCs you get tax relief as you save but the pension you buy with them is subject to tax, whereas savings in Tessa and Peps have to be made out of taxed income but the proceeds are free of tax."

"It really depends on where you see tax rates going. If you believe they are relatively low now but likely to rise in the future, you may prefer to pay tax at today's rates and save through a Tessa or a Peps to be sure of tax-free cash in the future."

"What's more, they offer greater flexibility than an AVC scheme where you are locked into using the money towards your pension provision."

"Their lack of flexibility is also the reason why young people in their twenties and thirties should not be persuaded into tying savings up in AVCs."

Pension payable per £10,000 of AVC fund for a man retiring age 65

Level pension	£1,374 pa
Level pension with 50% widow's pension	£1,218 pa
Pension increasing at 5% pa	£1,003 pa
Pension increasing at 5% pa with 50% widow's pension	£846 pa

Source: Equitable Life

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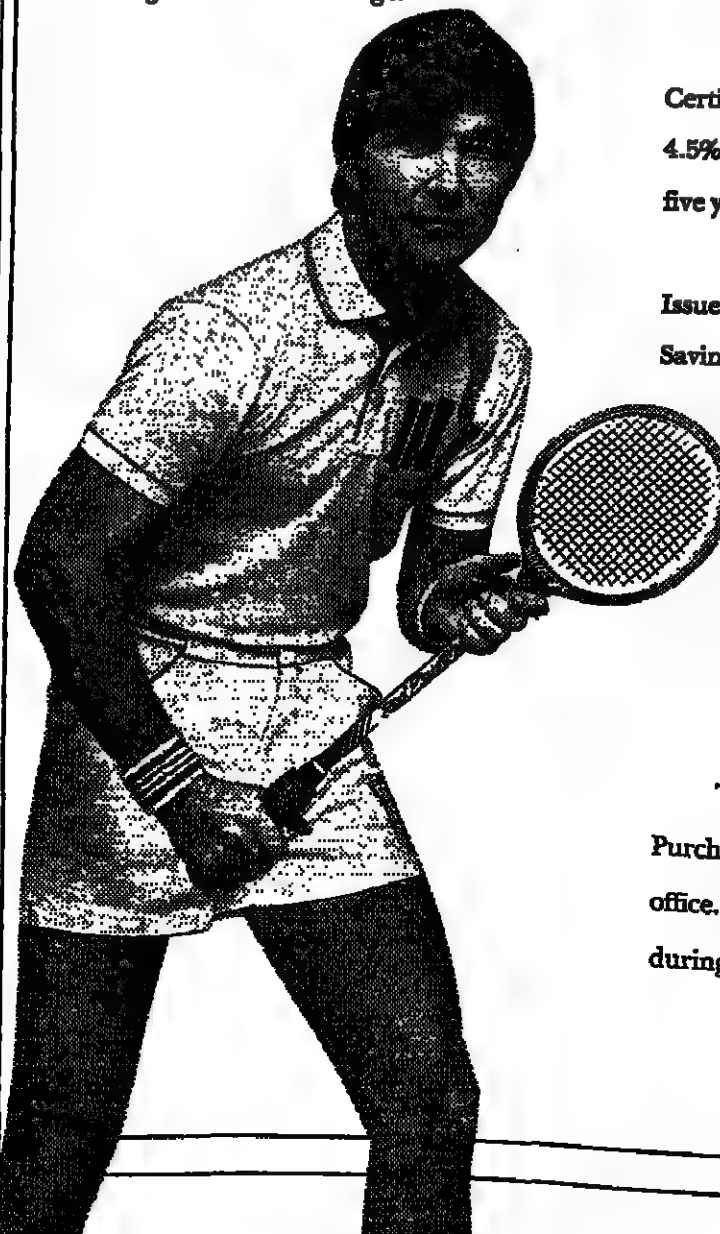
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Yours faithfully,
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Children get Abbey habit

From Messrs Adam Taussik
Sir, The Abbey National is the building society for children. You can pay in small amounts: I paid in 50p on Saturday. You can't pay in a large sum. There is a savers' club and bronze, silver and gold awards if you save enough. I have got my bronze and silver, my brother has got his gold award.

Yours faithfully,
ADAM TAUSSIK, aged 11,
4 Langstone Avenue,
Langstone, Havant,
Hampshire.



Investors have right to compensation where trust is misplaced

From Mr Antony Gold
Sir, As a solicitor-acting for a number of groups of investors who have come into being following the collapse of the Fimber members in whom they placed their money, I know that many of my clients disagree strongly with the comments made by Godfrey Jilings, the Chief Executive of Fimber, (Weekend Money, March 2).

Mr Jilings' observations on the availability of compensation following financial collapse have caused particular concern. The thrust of Mr Jilings' argument seems to be that the investing public would make wiser investment decisions were the availability of compensation even more restricted than it is at present. That cannot be true: When the public invest their savings with Mr Jilings' members, the last thing on their mind is whether some sort of statutory safety net exists.

Indeed, there is little in the present scheme of compensation to give investors that sort of encouragement and I wonder whether Mr Jilings has any evidence at all to support

Change in banks was solution

From Mrs Gillian Balmforth
Sir, The idea of a promise to nationalise banks by Robin Bunnage (Weekend Money letters, March 2) forces me to reply indignantly.

The answer to customer problems is to change banks. I have done this twice from National Westminster to Lloyds and then from Lloyds to Royal Bank of Scotland.

I have banked with the latter for the past 12 years and have no hesitation in recommending my branch to anyone. Counter staff are pleasant, meaning I rarely have to queue up for service, I am advised by specialist staff as I need them, and my bank manager, instead of being "locked away behind steel doors", greeted me warmly into his office this week and offered me a cup of tea!

If at any time the manager is busy or unavailable a request to ring me at home is dealt with promptly and efficiently. If customers do not get the service they want they have only themselves to blame. Competition between banks is fierce, and all managers recognize the importance of good customer relations and will do all they can to help.

Try telling them what you want, and they will be only too happy to assist. Can the same be said of some nationalised industries?

Yours faithfully,
GILLIAN E. BALMFORTH,
50 Paster Lane,
Sheffield,
South Yorkshire.

From Mr G.A. Goodve
Sir, With reference to Mr Bunnage's letter (Weekend Money, March 2) in my experience, bank branch managers continue to remain freely available to their customers, a relatively small number of branches having "personal bankers".

As regards staffing, members of staff in small branches (under ten) have been falling. This will, no doubt, continue following recent announcements of job losses totalling 30,000 by the four major clearing banks.

And would nationalisation really improve matters? I suspect not.

Yours faithfully,
G.A. GOODVE,
Gray-Ella,
319 Outwood Common Road,
Billericay,
Essex.

SIB decision

From the head of press, SIB
Sir, Your report (Weekend Money, March 2) said that the abolition of the "Buyers Guide" is being considered by the SIB. This is untrue. This is one of a number of options being considered by the Quality of Information Working Party, with other changes designed to ensure clear distinction of status. The working party has not yet reported to SIB, so SIB has had no opportunity to take a view on these questions; no decision has been taken to publish an interim report. In March, SIB remains committed to clear disclosure of an adviser's status.

Yours faithfully,
BETTY POWELL,
The Securities and Investments Board,
Cavendish House,
2-14 Bunhill Row,
London EC1.

Credit balance

From C.L. Torro
Sir, In common with many readers, I cut up my Barclaycard as I could get the same service for no charge from another Visa card. Barclaycard have now refunded my annual charge of £8 in the form of a credit balance. The question is: how do I make use of this credit as I no longer have a Barclaycard? Yours faithfully,
C.L. TORRO,
55 Pemberton Road,
London N4.

© The Times regrets it cannot give individual replies or advice. No legal responsibility can be accepted for advice or statements in these columns.

TAXHAVEN

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Definitions

(a) "Investment Plan" means the form of application approved by the Plan Manager as amended from time to time.

(b) "Investor" means the individual named in the Application Form as the applicant.

(c) "Plan" means the INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd Personal Equity Plan (PEP) which may be varied by the Plan Manager and references to the Plan shall apply to all Plans established in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.

(d) "Plan Manager" means INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd which has been approved by the Commissioners of the Inland Revenue to act as a plan manager and which is a member of the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation (IMRO) and is subject to the control of the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

(e) "Plan Investment" means a diversified portfolio of investments managed by INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd.

(f) "The Plan" means the Investment Plan approved by the Plan Manager and references to the Plan shall apply to all Plans established in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.

(g) "The Plan Manager" means the Plan Manager appointed by the Plan Manager and references to the Plan Manager shall apply to all Plans established in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.

(h) "The Plan Investment" means the Plan Investment managed by the Plan Manager and references to the Plan Investment shall apply to all Plans established in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.

(i) "The Plan Manager" means the Plan Manager appointed by the Plan Manager and references to the Plan Manager shall apply to all Plans established in accordance with these Terms and Conditions.

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2. General

(a) INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd shall act as plan manager for the Investor in order to provide the benefits of a Personal Equity Plan in accordance with the Regulations.

(b) All transactions between the Plan Manager and the Investor in relation to the Plan shall be subject to these Terms and Conditions.

(c) Investors will not receive guaranteed returns from the Plan Manager. Application forms and cheques will be sent to the Plan Manager.

(d) The Plan Manager reserves the right to vary the Plan from time to time to comply with the Regulations and to vary the Plan from time to time to comply with the Regulations.

(e) INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd is an authorized person under the Financial Services Act 1986 and is subject to the control of the Financial Services Authority (FSA).

(f) The Plan Manager reserves the right to vary the Plan from time to time to comply with the Regulations and to vary the Plan from time to time to comply with the Regulations.

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3. Investment

(a) Investments in the Plan shall be made with cash or in kind.

(b) Investments in the Plan shall be made with cash or in kind.

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4. Withdrawal

(a) The Investor may withdraw from the Plan at any time.

(b) The Investor may withdraw from the Plan at any time.

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5. Other

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MIM BRITANNIA - NO. 1 FOR PEPs

TIME IS RUNNING OUT.

DON'T MISS THE DEADLINE FOR MAXIMUM TAX FREE BENEFITS!

There are only three weeks left before this year's PEP deadline.

But with MIM Britannia's TAXHAVEN HIGH INCOME plan, you can beat the PEP deadline and receive maximum TAX FREE benefits. With TaxHaven High Income you can receive a TAX FREE INCOME that can grow and grow to help give you the comfort and security you require, both now and in retirement. But hurry, applications must be received by March 28th, to allow for the seven day cooling-off period.

TaxHaven High Income is a share PEP (Personal Equity Plan) which invests directly in UK quoted shares. This means your investment will be:

- * FREE from Income Tax on your dividends (even for higher rate taxpayers).
- * FREE from capital gains tax.

It can be as little as £2,000 or as much as £6,000.

Inflation and interest rates are already on the decline this year and the UK stockmarket is up by over 10% since the outbreak of the Gulf war in mid-January.

So, invest TAX FREE now and take full advantage of the improving outlook for the U.K. stockmarket.

Invest with MIM Britannia and you'll be investing with the U.K.'s No. 1 PEP Provider. Since April 1989 our award-winning company has attracted over £220m worth of new PEP business making us the leading PEP company.

Remember, share prices and the income from them, can go down as well as up and investors may not get back the amount they invested, particularly in the case of early surrender.

DON'T MISS OUT! Speak to your independent financial adviser or read the terms and conditions opposite carefully and complete the application form below and return it FREEPOST with your cheque TODAY!

MIM Britannia is the business name for INVERSCO MIM Management Limited, which is a member of IMRO and a subsidiary of INVERSCO MIM PLC. The levels and details are those currently applicable and may change. The value of any tax relief depends on personal circumstances.

* From 3.4.90 to 6.10.90.
Source: Best PEP Advice.

TAXHAVEN APPLICATION FORM

Please complete in BLOCK CAPITALS and check that you have provided full accurate details before sending to: MIM BRITANNIA, FREEPOST, 11 Devonshire Square, London EC2B 2TL.

IF YOU WANT AN ADDITIONAL APPLICATION FORM FOR YOUR PARTNER, PLEASE CALL US ON 0800 010 332.

OFFICE USE ONLY

1. INVESTMENT DETAILS (Only one plan may be selected)

Please indicate your choice by ticking the relevant box. The minimum investment is £2,000 and the maximum is £6,000, which includes the Manager's initial charge of 5% + VAT. Please make your cheque payable to INVERSCO MIM Management Limited.

TaxHaven High Income (unrestricted income) ☐

TaxHaven High Income (restricted income) ☐

I would like to invest (including charges) ☐

2. PERSONAL DETAILS

MIM PEP reference (if existing plan holder)

Title (Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms/Ms)

Surname

Postcode

Permanent UK Address

(a "care of" address cannot be accepted)

Telephone Number

Date of Birth

National Insurance Number

or Pension Number

Tax District and reference (if known)

3. CHECKLIST

Enclosed cheque made payable to INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd? ☐

Cheque investment amount? ☐

Completed all personal details including National Insurance/Pension Number? ☐

NOW PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE FOLLOWING DECLARATION

I apply for a TAXHAVEN Personal Equity Plan for the current tax year. I confirm that I have read and understood the current brochure and agree to be bound by the Terms and Conditions. I declare that I am aged 18 or over and I am a resident and ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom ("UK") for tax purposes or non-resident but performing duties which by virtue of section 132 (4) (a) of the Income and Corporation Taxes Act 1988 are treated as being performed in the UK, and that I HAVE MADE NO OTHER APPLICATION TO SUBSCRIBE TO ANOTHER PERSONAL EQUITY PLAN FOR THE TAX YEAR TO WHICH THIS APPLICATION RELATES.

I authorise INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd. to hold my cash subscription, Plan investments, interest, distributions and any other cash and to make on my behalf any claims for relief from tax in respect of my Plan investments to the Inland Revenue. I authorise INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd. as Plan Manager on my written request to transfer or pay to me, as the case may be, Plan investments, interest, distributions, rights or other proceeds in respect of such investments or cash. I declare that the information given in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and that I will inform INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd. without delay of any change in my circumstances affecting any of the information given on the form.

Please note no interest will be paid on sums held by INVERSCO MIM Management Ltd. during the statutory 7 day cooling-off period, pending commencement of the Plan and accordingly you will not receive the benefit of the Client Money Rules governing payment of interest.

Signature _____ Date _____

* Inland Revenue PEP regulations mean that we cannot accept this application without your National Insurance number or Pension number. Your National Insurance number can be found on your payroll, your tax return, your tax code notice or from your employer's personnel department.

YOUR MONEY & HOW TO KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

Rising cost of living, taxes - is it any wonder that it's difficult to hold onto your money? Planning for the future is even more difficult.

"Arranging Your Affairs" is a practical 28 page guide to sorting out your finances - free from Allied Dunbar. It describes how you can control your money and keep it in the family. Ideas for today and plans for tomorrow.

FREE

To receive your copy, simply complete the coupon and post it to:

Sue Hunt, Allied Dunbar Assurance plc, FREEPOST, Swindon SN1 1XZ. (no stamp needed).

Alternatively, phone 0800 010500 (24hr answering service - no charge).

We will let you have details of our free Financial Health Check at the same time.

Please send WITHOUT OBLIGATION my copy of "Arranging your Affairs" and details of your free consultation service.

(Block Capitals please) (Mr/Ms/Ms/Ms) Initials Name _____

Address _____

Town _____

County _____ Post Code _____

Telephone (Home/Work) _____

NO STAMP NEEDED OR PHONE 0800 010500 (24 HOURS)

ALLIED DUNBAR Member of LAUTRO

AS INTEREST RATES FALL

Ecclesiastical
INSURANCE YOU CAN BELIEVE IN

MEMBERSHIP (1971-72)
\$100 for full year, \$50 for 6 months, \$25 for 3 months

A member of
CLUBS

... (1) ...

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1036.

Ref Code: 7305

Fidelity Investments

10000 Fidelity Blvd, Suite 1000
Baltimore, MD 21286-7000
410.528.3000
www.fidelity.com

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 277: 1033-1036.

Please remember that past performance is no guide to the future. The value of a PEP and any underlying unit trust and the income from them may go down as well as up and the investor may not get back the amount originally invested. Tax assumptions are subject to statutory change and the value of tax relief will depend on the circumstances of the investor.

In: Investor Services Department, Henderson Financial Management Limited, FREEPOST, London EC2R 1SX.
 Please send me details of your tax free Extra Income PEP. (No-one will call on you.)

Name Address

 Postcode
 My Financial Adviser is
 Henderson Financial Management Limited. Member of IMRO.

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HENDERSON
 THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS

HENDERSON
THE INVESTMENT MANAGERS

Portfolio PLATINUM

From your Portfolio Platinum card check your eight share price movements on this page only. Add them up to give you your overall total and check this against the daily dividend figure. If it matches you have won outright, or a share of the daily prize money. If you win, follow the claim procedure on the back of your card. Always have your card available when claiming. Game rules appear on the back of your card.

No.	Company	Group	Gain or Loss
1	South West	Water	
2	Tomkins	Industrial S-Z	
3	Packland 'A'	Textiles	
4	Pink	Electricals	
5	Sand Chan	Banking/Discount	
6	Jarvis	Building/Roads	
7	Son TV	Leisure	
8	Lea Service	Motor/Aircraft	
9	Richardson West	Industrial L-R	
10	Elect Data Process	Electricals	
11	Nat West	Banking/Discount	
12	Thames Water	Water	
13	Johnstone Press	Newspapers/Pub	
14	Richard (Leeds)	Industrial L-R	
15	Shell	Oil/Gas	
16	Stag Furniture	Industrial S-Z	
17	FR Group	Motor/Aircraft	
18	MB-Candies	Industrial L-R	
19	British Gas	Oil/Gas	
20	West of England	Food	
21	Richardson Int	Industrial L-R	
22	Sainsbury	Food	
23	Cambridge Elec	Electricals	
24	Havist (D)	Industrial E-K	
25	Barclays Ind	Building/Roads	
26	Capital Radio	Leisure	
27	Ferguson Int	Paper/Print/Adv	
28	Morley Docks	Transport	
29	Unilever	Industrial S-Z	
30	Magnolia	Industrial L-R	
31	Tilbury Group	Building/Roads	
32	Charles Ind	Industrial A-D	
33	Admiral	Electricals	
34	Lowell (V)	Building/Roads	
35	Europacorp	Industrial E-K	
36	Goat Pet	Oil/Gas	
37	Fletcher King	Property	
38	Reed Executive	Industrial L-R	
39	Pack	Electricals	
40	BBA	Industrial A-D	
41	Mind	Electricals	
42	Wessex Water	Water	
43	WMA	Newspapers/Pub	
44	Sheep Estate	Property	
© Times Newspapers Ltd. Daily Total			

Please take into account any minus signs

Weekly Dividend

Please make a note of your daily totals for the weekly dividend of £4,000 in today's newspaper:

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun

Yesterday's £4,000 Portfolio Platinum prize was won by Miss Bridget Aglen of London SW19.

BRITISH FUNDS

1990/91 High Low Stock Price Divs %

SHORTS (Under Five Years)

Company	High	Low	Stock	Price	Divs	%
1						
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FIVE TO FIFTEEN YEARS

Company	High	Low	Stock	Price	Divs	%
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MOTOR RACING

Opening race that is not quite up everybody's street

FROM NORMAN HOWELL IN PHOENIX, ARIZONA

THE MOOD is decidedly nervous here as the teams gather for tomorrow's United States Grand Prix, the opening race of the Formula One season, around the street circuit in this south-western city.

Already the drivers and managers of the leading teams are involved in "damage limitation speak": "well, it's a street circuit... it's the first race... the surface won't be grippy enough... we have detuned the engine for this race."

It does seem odd to start in Phoenix. The town is not exactly buzzing with excitement over this alien sport. And the road surface, especially during practice before enough rubber has been put down, is slippery and it is not uncommon for a large number of cars to skid and slide into the concrete walls.

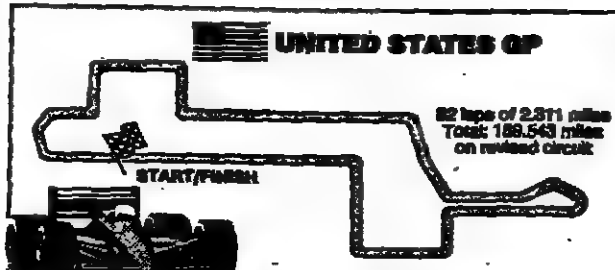
The circuit has been modified to make it a little faster, though this is not welcomed by all drivers, mainly because of the walls: straw and tyres are easier on man and car.

Ken Tyrrell has the answer. "Where else can you race in warm weather?" he says. "This is a summer sport, all the winter testing is done in the mildest temperatures we can find. So it would be odd and awkward for the teams to start in Europe." The weather here is certainly pleasant, the temperature in the mid-seventies with clean, dry desert air. But the lack of atmosphere detracts from the spectacle.

There is also the question of how the new rule concerning drivers' discipline will influence the driving itself.

After a long meeting at which all the drivers were shown a compilation video of last year's accidents, it was announced that the race stewards will have the authority to penalise a driver deemed to have acted dangerously a maximum of 10 seconds.

This means that the car will have to come back to the pit



lane, wait 10 seconds and then rejoin the race. Pit lanes vary, but most occurred that by the time the car has driven in, waited and taken off again, at least 40 seconds would pass. And no tyre-changing will be allowed on that lap.

Tyrrell was unimpressed: "Well, I can tell you that it won't happen very often and certainly not here." His loud laugh underlined what many of the older Formula One hands think of all this tinkering: it is a race, man on man, machine on machine.

The threat of penalties will not stop the duels that have riveted the public. And should it come, it is the nature of the sport.

And some of the younger drivers, such as Stefano Modena, the Italian in the Tyrrell team, guardedly welcome the new rules, "but only if they are properly administered".

This reference to a new safety commission which will oversee matters of discipline, and which has the power to overrule the race stewards, is a reflection of many drivers' feeling that politics will more often than not determine some of the decisions.

Ayrton Senna, the world champion, made some criticism, this time of another new set of rules which will make every race count for the world championship, and grant ten points for a win, instead of last season's nine. "Making all races count is unfair, because it could penalise a reliable fast team, and one which has had to drop one or two races

through bad luck, such as a stone in the radiator," the Brazilian said.

Gerhard Berger, the McLaren team-mate, raised the same objection, possibly because this matter had been recently discussed by the team. But it does seem odd to complain about this rule. It encourages less tactical racing and more of the old-fashioned all-or-nothing that the spectators like.

Alain Prost, the French Ferrari driver who has been Senna's biggest rival, favoured the change that puts a higher premium on reliability. "I think it's a very good decision," he said. "The concept favours a driver going not only for the win, he must be also trying to finish all the races."

Prost said the changes in scoring would be good for the sport, for the drivers and much better for the spectators, who will know that every point earned from each race will count. "This year will be more interesting for everybody," he said.

The traditional Marlboro press conference, when most of the leading drivers appear, has become a hypnosis affair, with obvious questions being answered politely but dully. Senna, so attentive to his surroundings, tried to enliven proceedings.

When asked his opinion of Prost, Senna, as he often does, took a moment to think and then, in his most serious voice, said: "I think he is too short to be a great driver."

Duelling in the steps of Granger

MARC ASPLAND

LAURA THOMPSON

I once knew a man who was a fencer. He was also a Bulgar, a poet, a film producer, a scriptwriter and an actor. He occasionally appeared on television playing the part of a fencer, or of a fencing master. He never referred to himself as "I" but as "this citizen".

This citizen once spent an evening with him during which he read aloud from one of his film scripts. The central character was a noble and poetic Eastern European who was extremely good at fencing. He then read aloud to me all his poems, some of which made mention of fencing, although in the most oblique of terms via metaphors about thrusting and parrying.

Despite his theatrical bent, The Citizen was a real fencer, whereas all the other fencers of whom I had knowledge were actors. Douglas Fairbanks, Burt Reynolds, Paul Robeson, Stewart Granger: they could all swashbuckle and, more important, they could all do it while backing up the fight of steps that scaled the outer wall of a castle.

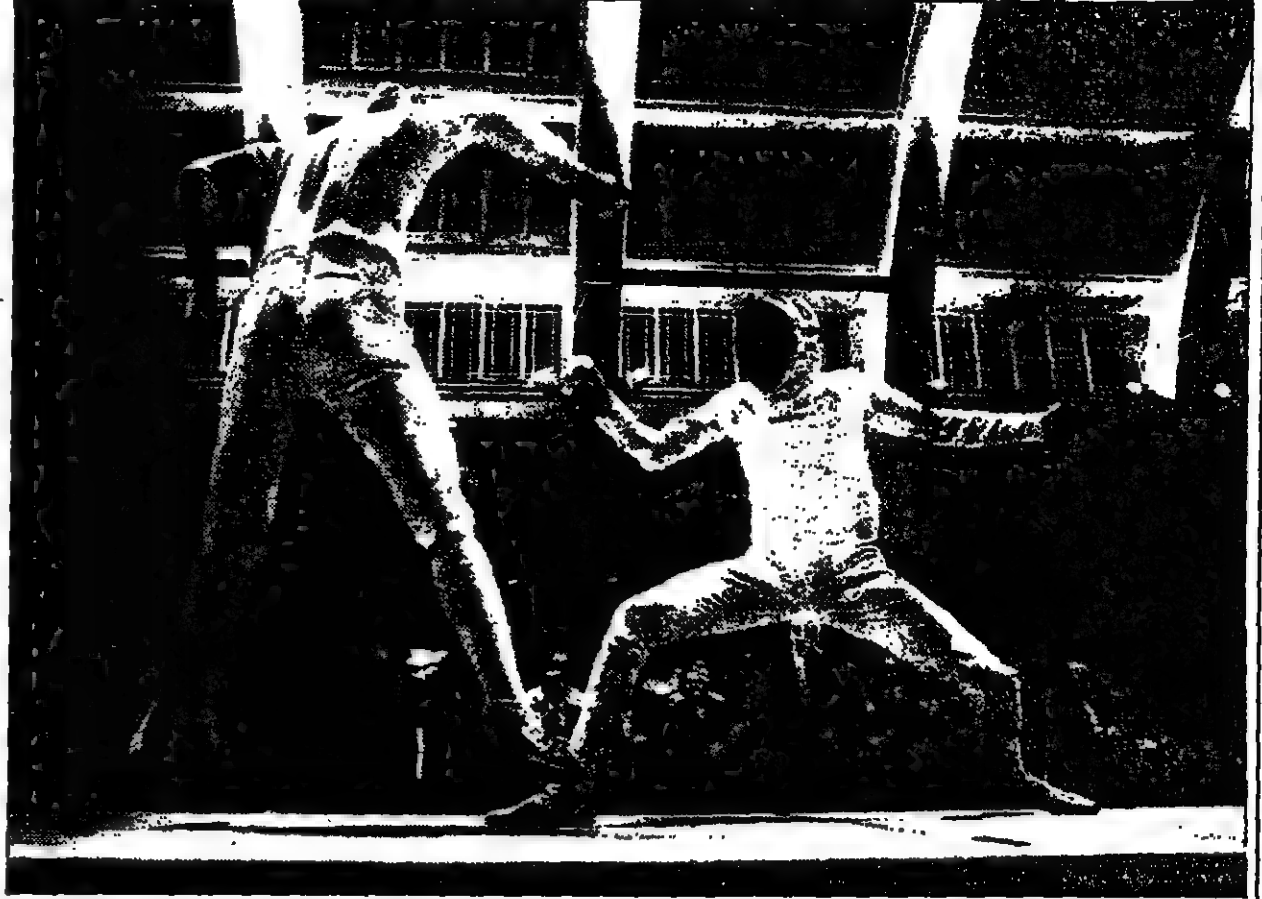
And then, of course, there are theatre actors, all of whom have to learn to fence in preparation for the day when they are asked to play Hamlet for the Royal Shakespeare Company. Clank-clank-clank go the sword, and the fencer's face with the fact that he has not stopped acting for three hours while Laertes has been doing crosswords with the Ghost in the Green Room.

My prior vision of the Challenge Martini International Epee fencing had been influenced by all of this and I was shocked to find that the event was taking place in a leisure centre, rather than in a courtyard with Stewart Granger steps from which the blood of old duels had been grimly scrubbed. I had also imagined myself sitting drinking tea of vermouth in the unwanted company of The Citizen.

This image was so strong that I felt cheated, when I was made to perceive his bombastic appearance in the audience; although I should have known that he would be playing D'Arignani upon a Sofian stage and that fencing inside a leisure centre would be anathema to him.

Actually, that was my feeling also. I have never liked leisure centres — they always remind me of why I dislike playing sport — all those witnesses to one's ineptitude, all that grind and imperfection that I do not want to know about; and I dislike them especially as venues for sporting events.

The Latchmere Leisure Centre, where Lloyd Honeyghan made his boxing comeback, was so non-atmospheric as to make the Barbican seem like Castle Rackrent. Fencing and leisure centres have essential styles which are surely doomed to clash with each



A touch of touché: cinematic heroics without the plumed hats in the Challenge Martini epee tournament

other, like Tyrrell and Rocco.

After all, fencing is glamorous, and so are its practitioners. The winner of the competition, Ulf Sandergren, of Sweden, was the object of a two-hour crush such as my mother would have had on Stewart Granger in *Scaramouche* had she not been the superior, astute type of teenager who went for Marion Brando.

Hollywood was right to choose fencing as a way of enshrining cinematic heroics because it is breathtakingly skilful, it comes with its own dramatic clank-clank sword effects and any man that can do it looks extraordinarily dashing, unless he is Joe Foweraker.

Also, as with boxing, the sort of danger has not been rendered antiseptic by the dictates of sport: this is still man-to-man combat and the

concentration could hardly have been greater if the fencers had been fighting for their lives instead of for some money, a trophy and a Nebuchadnezzar of Martini.

The glamour was mitigated somewhat by the fact that instead of plumed hats and big lace collars, the fencers wore white body stockings that were divided into little segments, like a drawing of an insect in a child's biology book.

Instead of being able to clank-clank backwards up steps and leap from thence on to their opponents, they were restrained at the hip by long leads. And instead of an audience of handkerchief-clutching maidens plus the entire court of Denmark, they were watched by leisure centre types plus what looked like extras from *The Good Life* (attending a cocktail party held by Penelope Keith

into which Richard Briers would have taken a pig under his arm).

The leisure centre types seemed to know about fencing, probably because they took leisure centre classes in it. *The Good Life* types seemed to know about fencing, probably because they had done it at school.

Both sets of people had that air of being Minor Sports Lovers, which I had detected before at real tennis and bowls: they have taken up something unusual as a hobby and thereafter their interest value will revolve around its arcane surprisingness.

Fencing, however, needs a resurgence of the swashbuckling cinematic tradition. I suggest a rewrite of Zorro in which, instead of the letter Z, The Citizen will carve a C into anything that takes his fancy, as a way of leaving his mark upon the world.

CYCLING

Brothers hoping for double

By PETER BRYAN

ALAN and Mark Gormall, as strong a brothers' cycling combination as any in Britain, adopt a routine this weekend that last year brought them success. The Clitheroe Hill farmers have, as their main target, tomorrow, Colchester Road's 60-mile road race, won last year by Alan, marking his retirement as an amateur.

He went clear in a solo bid 20 miles from the finish to win by more than two minutes, with his younger brother, Mark, in fourth place. The previous day, the pair had ridden the Conville road race "because it was on our way south". Mark being runner-up and his brother sixth. Later in the season, Alan won the national 12-hour time trial. This weekend the pattern will be similar, with both brothers being ridden as hard as the pair can. The Colchester race is the more important of the two and may prove Gormall's last in 1990, as no professional teams have entered.

The pair, working during daylight hours, have had to contend with a punishing week. Alan is the fitter, Mark has been lethargic for the last three weeks and fears that it will be towards the end of the month before he sees an improvement in his form.

Rowing

Top crew for Thames in women's race

THE four-and-a-quarter-mile women's head of the river from Mortlake to Putney today has attracted an entry of 161 girls (Mike Rosewell writes). Although slightly down on last year, the numbers back up the view that rowing is the fastest growing women's sport in Britain.

Great Britain squad members with this year's racing in their club crews: Thames A, the No. 1 crew away, includes Kate Brownlow, Miriam Batten and Sue Key, all members of the 1990 world champions team. Thames, who admitted women rowers for their portals 15 years ago, now have more women rowing than men and have seven crews in the race.

Oxford women's boat race crew and their reserves will start among the new entries at 10.4 and 12.2 but will not be opposed by their Cambridge counterparts, whose entry arrived too late. Oxford's main student opposition is likely to come from London University, who start fourth and are stalked by Cecilia Tindlund, a former Norwegian junior champion. Strong Tisbury and Kingston crews fill the second and third placings.

FOOTBALL

3.0 unless stated

FA Cup

Sixth round

Arsenal v Cambridge

Norwich v Nottm Forest

Barclays League

First division

Aston Villa v Luton

Crystal Palace v Southampton

Leeds v QPR

Manchester City v Liverpool

Sunderland v Sheffield Utd

Second division

Bristol City v Ipswich

Luton v Hull

Millwall v Oxford

Oxford v Brighton

Preston v Bristol R

Preston v Charlton

Preston v Blackpool

Sheff Wed v Wrexham

Wolves v Barnsley

Third division

Bolton v Fulham

Brentford v Stoke

Chester v Mansfield

Exeter v Bury

Grimsby v Southend

Huddersfield v Crewe

Huddersfield v Walsley

Huddersfield v Tranmere

Rotherham v Birmingham

Sunderland v Bournemouth

Wigan v Shrewsbury

Fourth division

Barnley v Gillingham

Barnley v Grimsby

Barnley v Aldershot

Barnley v Hartlepool

Barnley v Gillingham

Barnley v Grimsby

B and Q Scottish League

Premier division

Aberdeen v Dundee

Hibernian v Celtic

Rangers v Hearts

St Johnstone v Motherwell

St Mirren v Dundee Utd

First division

Aston Villa v Luton

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Bristol City v Ipswich

Luton v Hull

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

World Cup c

The Times next week presents competition with prizes of top-quality event in the rugby union year, the final at Twickenham. The competition starts next Thursday, Friday

Competition

2 -711 LADY PHILIPPA 14 (GD) B Hls 8-9-
013 CAROMANDO 147 (F) M Bld 8-9-
3-78 QUICK RAMBLER 32 (COUSE) M Adm
6 812 OLD SPECKLED HEN 14 (C) M Fether
-215 CLASSIC ACCOUNT 14 (C) C Wldm
-258 PAINT THE LILY 14 D Jimmy 7-7-
6821 COMTEC FLYER 10 (B) J Bodonley



admiring but frequently exhausted spectator of her husband's antics. "He's always had this 100 per cent faith in himself that he could train better than anyone he was working for. That's why he had so many jobs — because he kept telling them."

DOWN TOWN PARK	171	271	371
NEPSTON	182	282	382
ONCASTER	183	283	383
R	184	284	384

2 -711 LADY PHILOPPA 14 (GD) B Hls S-D-
3 013 CAROLANDOO 147 (F) M Sds 8-9-
4 2-10 QUICK RAMBON 22 (C) M Adm
5 612 OLD SPECKLED HEN 14 (C) M Father
6 -315 CLASSIC ACCOUNT 14 (C) C Wilkes
7 -138 PAINT THE LILY 14 D Jenny 7-7-
8 6621 COMTEC FLYER 10 (B) J Bostonley
5-2 Lady Philoppe, 7-2 Comtec Flyer, 8-2 C

3-20 7-2 fav; 2 Post; 6 Gen (1 Frost);
3, Galt; Oatmeal (1) Durwoudy, 5-1.
LSO RAN: 9-2 Salsor Luck, 10-2
Lando Cottage (9-8), 8 it's After Thru,
Scales (4-8), 20 Anytime (8-1).
Rhythm and Song (up), 25 Warner For Winings,
3 Achilleas, 85 Armale (up), 12 ran., 41, 101,
3-21, 234, 5 Woodman at Chickadee.
Color: \$4.50; \$1.50, \$1.40, \$2.50. DF:
\$1.50; CGF: \$18.01.

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[illegible]

DOWN TOWN PARK	171	271	371
NEPSTON	182	282	382
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3-20 7-2 fav; 2 Post; 6 Gen (1 Frost);
3, Galt; Oatmeal (1) Durwoudy, 5-1.
LSO RAN: 9-2 Salsor Luck, 10-2
Lando Cottage (89), 8 it's After Thru,
Soots (48), 20 Anytime (8), Rhythm
and Song (9), 25 Warner For Winings, 33
Jockins, 85 Armale (9), 12 ran., 41, 101,
331, 234, 5 Woodman at Chickadee.
Color: \$4.50; \$1.50, \$1.40, \$2.50. DP:
\$3.00; CBF: \$18.61.

The Times next week presents an exclusive three-part competition with prizes of top-quality visits to the greatest event in the rugby union year, the World Cup, including the final at Twickenham. The competition will be in *The Times* next Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

TRAINER: B. Hills, 12 winners from 30 runners, 40.0%; M. Prescott, 9 from 25, 32.0%; W. O'Grain, 10 from 48, 20.8%; T. Barron, 5 from 23, 21.7%; D. Murphy Smith, 10 from 48, 20.8%; M. Johnston, 6 from 22, 27.3%.

JOCKEYS: Emma O'Grain, 8 winners from 32 rides, 25.0%; K. Butler, 4 from 18, 22.0%; Alex Greaves, 6 from 23, 26.1%; S. O'Grain, 12 from 80, 30.0%; Dean McGeehan, 12 from 60.



State Jester has best credentials

By MANDARIN
(MICHAEL PHILLIPS)

THE Imperial Cup would be at the mercy of Al Asof at Sandown Park today if his recent defeat of the former champion hurdler Beech Road, subsequent Haydock winter Sandoz and Deep Sensation was a true reflection of his ability. My inclination, however, is to disregard the Fontwell loss because it could flatter Al Asof since his principal rivals were unlikely to be 100 per cent that day as their sights were set on the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham next Tuesday.

Also, the 4lb penalty that he picked up means that he must now carry the same weight again as State Jester. On the last occasion that they met, at Ascot in January, they also carried identical weights and State Jester proved superior to the tune of three-and-a-half lengths when they finished second and fifth respectively behind Olveston.

Discussing State Jester's chance yesterday, his trainer Bill Elsey said that while the eight-year-old's preparation was held up for a while by the frost and snow early last

month, he takes great comfort from the fact that State Jester won first time out this season at Ayr to show himself to be a clean-minded horse. Whenever Al Asof finishes the recent easy Lingfield winner Champagne Lad should be thereabouts. They finished first and second at Fontwell at the end of December, and Champagne Lad is now considerably better off.

The two miles around Sandown is likely to be too sharp for the top weight Yabeh, while the ground should prove too soft for Stratford Ponds.

Honest Word and Star Season, the winners of good races at Newbury and Kempton, should give another good account.

If when riding Venturist in the HMS Sandown Novices' Hurdle, Richard Dunwoody fails to beat the Reg Akers-trained gelding, compensation could easily come later with a double on Bigsum (3.35) and Acre Hill (4.40).

Bigsum, Dunwoody's likely mount in this year's Grand National, will be contesting the Food Brokers Royal Game Handicap Chase in the hope

that he does not get into the tough duel he endured last year while winning the Ritz Club Steeple Chase at Cheltenham.

In hindsight, that hard race may have put him over the top by the time that he went to Aintree, where he finished a creditable sixth.

Rinus, another with the Grand National firmly in his sights again - he finished third last year - will have a second crack sharper in the Doonholm Handicap Chase today, having finished fourth behind Saba Dn Loo at Worcester ten days ago, but he should not be up to beating Routadereff over two miles.

Peter Niven, who has gained a host of admirers this season, can land my nap on Fishki (3.15), who was clearly not right when finishing only third last time behind Abbott Of Furness. She became a victim of equine flu immediately afterwards.

Before that, he had beaten Burgoyne, Greek Fluter and Rose Venture well enough on today's course, when it was equally soft, to suggest that she could have been treated leniently by the handicapper here.

AYR

Selections

By Mandarin
2.15 Turfida. 2.45 Bantal Buccooner. 3.15 Fishki (nap). 3.45 Taran Tempest. 4.15 Boudard. 4.45 Vestal Hills. 5.15 General Pershing.

By Thunderer
2.15 Staghaw Belle. 2.45 Arctic Skyflight. 3.15 Canol Pica. 3.45 Taran Tempest. 4.15 GEN-AL. 4.45 Boudard. 5.15 General Pershing.

Michael Seely's selection: 5.15 GENERAL PERSHING (nap).

Going: soft

2.15 JAMES BARCLAY MEMORIAL TROPHY (Maiden hurdle: 22.08m; 2m 6f) (13 runners)

- 1 ABT MY BOY 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 CELTIC BRIDGE 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 HIGHLAND RANGAL 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 KAMALIA RAMBLER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 9 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 10 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 11 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 12 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 13 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

2.45 AFTON NOVICES CHASE (22.08m; 2m 4f) (11 runners)

- 1 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 9 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 10 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 11 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

3.15 AYRSHIRE YECAMRY CUP (Handicap hurdle: 22.08m; 2m 4f) (8 runners)

- 1 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

DONCASTER

Selections

By Mandarin
2.15 Granvillewaterford. 2.50 One For The Pot. 3.20 Perroquet. 3.55 Vulvory's Crown. 4.25 Lady Remainder. 4.55 Parsons Law. 5.25 Royal Progress.

By Thunderer
2.15 Granvillewaterford. 2.50 Rodeo Star. 3.20 Perroquet. 3.55 Vulvory's Crown. 4.25 Lonsboroughman. 4.55 He Who Dares Win. 5.25 Newlands-General.

Michael Seely's selection: 2.50 One For The Pot. Brian Beel's selection: 3.20 Perroquet.

Going: good

2.15 TICKHILL NOVICES HURDLE (22.37m; 2m 4f) (17 runners)

- 1 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 9 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 10 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 11 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 12 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 13 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 14 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 15 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 16 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 17 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

2.50 DONCASTER HANDICAP HURDLE (23.15m; 1m 50y) (11 runners)

- 1 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 9 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 10 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 11 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

3.20 PERROQUET (22.37m; 2m 4f) (17 runners)

- 1 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 9 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 10 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 11 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 12 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 13 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 14 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 15 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 16 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 17 GRANVILLEWATERFORD 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

3.45 WESTERN MEETING CLUB HANDICAP CHASE (22.84m; 3m 11y) (8 runners)

- 1 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

4.15 DOONHOLM HANDICAP CHASE (22.82m; 2m) (8 runners)

- 1 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

4.45 CREE LODGE NOVICES HURDLE (22.04m; 2m) (11 runners)

- 1 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 9 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 10 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 11 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

5.15 FREEHORN LADPOKES HANDICAP HURDLE (21.91m; 2m) (8 runners)

- 1 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 2 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 3 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 4 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 5 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 6 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 7 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer
- 8 BRYCE LEADER 10 (J) T Groom 10-10-10. N Dwyer

Course specialists

15-8 Granvillewaterford, 3 winners from 11 runners, 27.2% S. Major, 3 from 12, 25.0%; A. Macgregor, 4 from 17, 23.5%; G. Jones, 5 from 21, 23.8%; B. Brown, 6 from 26, 23.0%; C. White, 7 from 31, 22.6%; D. Black, 8 from 36, 22.2%; E. Green, 9 from 41, 21.9%; F. Blue, 10 from 46, 21.7%; G. Yellow, 11 from 51, 21.5%; H. Purple, 12 from 56, 21.4%; I. Pink, 13 from 61, 21.3%; J. Grey, 14 from 66, 21.2%; K. Brown, 15 from 71, 21.1%; L. Green, 16 from 76, 21.0%; M. Blue, 17 from 81, 20.9%; N. Yellow, 18 from 86, 20.8%; O. Purple, 19 from 91, 20.7%; P. Pink, 20 from 96, 20.6%; Q. Grey, 21 from 101, 20.5%; R. Brown, 22 from 106, 20.4%; S. Green, 23 from 111, 20.3%; T. Blue, 24 from 116, 20.2%; U. Yellow, 25 from 121, 20.1%; V. Purple, 26 from 126, 20.0%; W. Pink, 27 from 131, 19.9%; X. Grey, 28 from 136, 19.8%; Y. Brown, 29 from 141, 19.7%; Z. Green, 30 from 146, 19.6%; AA. Blue, 31 from 151, 19.5%; AB. Yellow, 32 from 156, 19.4%; AC. Purple, 33 from 161, 19.3%; AD. Pink, 34 from 166, 19.2%; AE. Grey, 35 from 171, 19.1%; AF. Brown, 36 from 176, 19.0%; AG. Green, 37 from 181, 18.9%; AH. Blue, 38 from 186, 18.8%; AI. Yellow, 39 from 191, 18.7%; AJ. Purple, 40 from 196, 18.6%; AK. Pink, 41 from 201, 18.5%; AL. Grey, 42 from 206, 18.4%; AM. Brown, 43 from 211, 18.3%; AN. Green, 44 from 216, 18.2%; AO. Blue, 45 from 221, 18.1%; AP. Yellow, 46 from 226, 18.0%; AQ. Purple, 47 from 231, 17.9%; AR. Pink, 48 from 236, 17.8%; AS. Grey, 49 from 241, 17.7%; AT. Brown, 50 from 246, 17.6%; AU. Green, 51 from 251, 17.5%; AV. Blue, 52 from 256, 17.4%; AW. Yellow, 53 from 261, 17.3%; AX. Purple, 54 from 266, 17.2%; AY. Pink, 55 from 271, 17.1%; AZ. Grey, 56 from 276, 17.0%; BA. Brown, 57 from 281, 16.9%; BB. Green, 58 from 286, 16.8%; BC. Blue, 59 from 291, 16.7%; BD. Yellow, 60 from 296, 16.6%; BE. Purple, 61 from 301, 16.5%; BF. Pink, 62 from 306, 16.4%; BG. Grey, 63 from 311, 16.3%; BH. Brown, 64 from 316, 16.2%; BI. Green, 65 from 321, 16.1%; BJ. Blue, 66 from 326, 16.0%; BK. Yellow, 67 from 331, 15.9%; BL. Purple, 68 from 336, 15.8%; BM. Pink, 69 from 341, 15.7%; BN. Grey, 70 from 346, 15.6%; BO. Brown, 71 from 351, 15.5%; BP. Green, 72 from 356, 15.4%; BQ. Blue, 73 from 361, 15.3%; BR. Yellow, 74 from 366, 15.2%; BS. Purple, 75 from 371, 15.1%; BT. Pink, 76 from 376, 15.0%; BU. Grey, 77 from 381, 14.9%; BV. Brown, 78 from 386, 14.8%; BV. Green, 79 from 391, 14.7%; BW. Blue, 80 from 396, 14.6%; BX. Yellow, 81 from 401, 14.5%; BY. Purple, 82 from 406, 14.4%; BZ. Pink, 83 from 411, 14.3%; CA. Grey, 84 from 416, 14.2%; CB. Brown, 85 from 421, 14.1%; CC. Green, 86 from 426, 14.0%; CD. Blue, 87 from 431, 13.9%; CE. Yellow, 88 from 436, 13.8%; CF. Purple, 89 from 441, 13.7%; CG. Pink, 90 from 446, 13.6%; CH. Grey, 91 from 451, 13.5%; CI. Brown, 92 from 456, 13.4%; CJ. Green, 93 from 461, 13.3%; CK. Blue, 94 from 466, 13.2%; CL. Yellow, 95 from 471, 13.1%; CM. Purple, 96 from 476, 13.0%; CN. Pink, 97 from 481, 12.9%; CO. Grey, 98 from 486, 12.8%; CP. Brown, 99 from 491, 12.7%; CQ. Green, 100 from 496, 12.6%; CR. Blue, 101 from 501, 12.5%; CS. Yellow, 102 from 506, 12.4%; CT. Purple, 103 from 511, 12.3%; CU. Pink, 104 from 516, 12.2%; CV. Grey, 105 from 521, 12.1%; CW. Brown, 106 from 526, 12.0%; CX. Green, 107 from 531, 11.9%; CY. Blue, 108 from 536, 11.8%; CZ. Yellow, 109 from 541, 11.7%; DA. Purple, 110 from 546, 11.6%; DB. Pink, 111 from 551, 11.5%; DC. Grey, 112 from 556, 11.4%; DD. Brown, 113 from 561, 11.3%; DE. Green, 114 from 566, 11.2%; DF. Blue, 115 from 571, 11.1%; DG. Yellow, 116 from 576, 11.0%; DH. Purple, 117 from 581, 10.9%; DI. Pink, 118 from 586, 10.8%; DJ. Grey, 119 from 591, 10.7%; DK. Brown, 120 from 596, 10.6%; DL. Green, 121 from 601, 10.5%; DM. Blue, 122 from 606, 10.4%; DN. Yellow, 123 from 611, 10.3%; DO. Purple, 124 from 616, 10.2%; DP. Pink, 125 from 621, 10.1%; DQ. Grey, 126 from 626, 10.0%; DR. Brown, 127 from 631, 9.9%; DS. Green, 128 from 636, 9.8%; DT. Blue, 129 from 641, 9.7%; DU. Yellow, 130 from 646, 9.6%; DV. Purple, 131 from 651, 9.5%; DW. Pink, 132 from 656, 9.4%; DX. Grey, 133 from 661, 9.3%; DY. Brown, 134 from 666, 9.2%; DZ. Green, 135 from 671, 9.1%; EA. Blue, 136 from 676, 9.0%; EB. Yellow, 137 from 681, 8.9%; EC. Purple, 138 from 686, 8.8%; ED. Pink, 139 from 691, 8.7%; EE. Grey, 140 from 696, 8.6%; EF. Brown, 141 from 701, 8.5%; EG. Green, 142 from 706, 8.4%; EH. Blue, 143 from 711, 8.3%; EI. Yellow, 144 from 716, 8.2%; EJ. Purple, 145 from 721, 8.1%; EK. Pink, 146 from 726, 8.0%; EL. Grey, 147 from 731, 7.9%; EM. Brown, 148 from 736, 7.8%; EN. Green, 149 from 741, 7.7%; EO. Blue, 150 from 746, 7.6%; EP. Yellow, 151 from 751, 7.5%; EQ. Purple, 152 from 756, 7.4%; ER. Pink, 153 from 761, 7.3%; ES. Grey, 154 from 766, 7.2%; ET. Brown, 155 from 771, 7.1%; EU. Green, 156 from 776, 7.0%; EV. Blue, 157 from 781, 6.9%; EW. Yellow, 158 from 786, 6.8%; EX. Purple, 159 from 791, 6.7%; EY. Pink, 160 from 796, 6.6%; EZ. Grey, 161 from 801, 6.5%; FA. Brown, 162 from 806, 6.4%; FB. Green, 163 from 811, 6.3%; FC. Blue, 164 from 816, 6.2%; FD. Yellow, 165 from 821, 6.1%; FE. Purple, 166 from 826, 6.0%; FF. Pink, 167 from 831, 5.9%; FG. Grey, 168 from 836, 5.8%; FH. Brown, 169 from 841, 5.7%; FI. Green, 170 from 846, 5.6%; FJ. Blue, 171 from 851, 5.5%; FK. Yellow, 172 from 856, 5.4%; FL. Purple, 173 from 861, 5.3%; FM. Pink, 174 from 866, 5.2%; FN. Grey, 175 from 871, 5.1%; FO. Brown, 176 from 876, 5.0%; FP. Green, 177 from 881, 4.9%; FQ. Blue, 178 from 886, 4.8%; FR. Yellow, 179 from 891, 4.7%; FS. Purple, 180 from 896, 4.6%; FT. Pink, 181 from 901, 4.5%; FU. Grey, 182 from 906, 4.4%; FV. Brown, 183 from 911, 4.3%; FW. Green, 184 from 916, 4.2%; FX. Blue, 185 from 921, 4.1%; FY. Yellow, 186 from 926, 4.0%; FZ. Purple, 187 from 931, 3.9%; GA. Pink, 188 from 936, 3.8%; GB. Grey, 189 from 941, 3.7%; GC. Brown, 190 from 946, 3.6%; GD. Green, 191 from 951, 3.5%; GE. Blue, 192 from 956, 3.4%; GF. Yellow, 193 from 961, 3.3%; GG. Purple, 194 from 966, 3.2%; GH. Pink, 195 from 971, 3.1%; GI. Grey, 196 from 976, 3.0%; GJ. Brown, 197 from 981, 2.9%; GK. Green, 198 from 986, 2.8%; GL. Blue, 199 from 991, 2.7%; GM. Yellow, 200 from 996, 2.6%; GN. Purple, 201 from 1001, 2.5%; GO. Pink, 202 from 1006, 2.4%; GP. Grey, 203 from 1011, 2.3%; GQ. Brown, 204 from 1016, 2.2%; GR. Green, 205 from 1021, 2.1%; GS. Blue, 206 from 1026, 2.0%; GT. Yellow, 207 from 1031, 1.9%; GU. Purple, 208 from 1036, 1.8%; GV. Pink, 209 from 1041, 1.7%; GW. Grey, 210 from 1046, 1.6%; GX. Brown, 211 from 1051, 1.5%; GY. Green, 212 from 1056, 1.4%; GZ. Blue, 213 from 1061, 1.3%; HA. Yellow, 214 from 1066, 1.2%; HB. Purple, 215 from 1071, 1.1%; HC. Pink, 216 from 1076, 1.0%; HD. Grey, 217 from 1081, 0.9%; HE. Brown, 218 from 1086, 0.8%; HF. Green, 219 from 1091, 0.7%; HG. Blue, 220 from 1096, 0.6%; HH. Yellow, 221 from 1101, 0.5%; HI. Purple, 222 from 1106, 0.4%; HJ. Pink, 223 from 1111, 0.3%; HK. Grey, 224 from 1116, 0.2%; HL. Brown, 225 from 1121, 0.1%; HM. Green, 226 from 1126, 0.0%; HN. Blue, 227 from 1131, 0.0%; HO. Yellow, 228 from 1136, 0.0%; HP. Purple, 229 from 1141, 0.0%; HQ. Pink, 230 from 1146, 0.0%; HR. Grey, 231 from 1151, 0.0%; HS. Brown, 232 from 1156, 0.0%; HT. Green, 233 from 1161, 0.0%; HU. Blue, 234 from 1166, 0.0%; HV. Yellow, 235 from 1171, 0.0%; HW. Purple, 236 from 1176, 0.0%; HX. Pink, 237 from 1181, 0.0%; HY. Grey, 238 from 1186, 0.0%; HZ. Brown, 239 from 1191, 0.0%; HA. Green, 240 from 1196, 0.0%; HB. Blue, 241 from 1201, 0.0%; HC. Yellow, 242 from 1206, 0.0%; HD. Purple, 243 from 1211, 0.0%; HE. Pink, 244 from 1216, 0.0%; HF. Grey, 245 from 1221, 0.0%; HG. Brown, 246 from 1226, 0.0%; HH. Green, 247 from 1231, 0.0%; HI. Blue, 248 from 1236, 0.0%; HJ. Yellow, 249 from 1241, 0.0%; HK. Purple, 250 from 1246, 0.0%; HL. Pink, 251 from 1251, 0.0%; HM. Grey, 252 from 1256, 0.0%; HN. Brown, 253 from 1261, 0.0%; HO. Green, 254 from 1266, 0.0%; HP. Blue, 255 from 1271, 0.0%; HQ. Yellow, 256 from 1276, 0.0%; HR. Purple, 257 from 1281, 0.0%; HS. Pink, 258 from 1286, 0.0%; HT. Grey, 259 from 1291, 0.0%; HU. Brown, 260 from 1296, 0.0%; HV. Green, 261 from 1301, 0.0%; HW. Blue, 262 from 1306, 0.0%; HX. Yellow, 263 from 1311, 0.0%; HY. Purple, 264 from 1316, 0.0%; HZ. Pink, 265 from 1321, 0.0%; IA. Grey, 266 from 1326, 0.0%; IB. Brown, 267 from 1331, 0.0%; IC. Green, 268 from 1336, 0.0%; ID. Blue, 269 from 1341, 0.0%; IE. Yellow, 270 from 1346, 0.0%; IF. Purple, 271 from 1351, 0.0%; IG. Pink, 272 from 1356, 0.0%; IH. Grey, 273 from 1361, 0.0%; II. Brown, 274 from 1366, 0.0%; IJ. Green, 275 from 1371, 0.0%; IK. Blue, 276 from 1376, 0.0%; IL. Yellow, 277 from 1381, 0.0%; IM. Purple, 278 from 1386, 0.0%; IN. Pink, 279 from 1391, 0.0%; IO. Grey, 280 from 1396, 0.0%; IP. Brown, 281 from 1401, 0.0%; IQ. Green, 282 from 1406, 0.0%; IR. Blue, 283 from 1411, 0.0%; IS. Yellow, 284 from 1416, 0.0%; IT. Purple, 285 from 1421, 0.0%; IU. Pink, 286 from 1426, 0.0%; IV. Grey, 287 from 1431, 0.0%; IW. Brown, 288 from 1436, 0.0%; IX. Green, 289 from 1441, 0.0%; IY. Blue, 290 from 1446, 0.0%; IZ. Yellow, 291 from 1451,

GOLF

Richardson casts his eagle eye on a second big prize

SANTA PONSA — Steve Richardson, fast emerging star of the European tour, taking advantage of two strokes of luck at the same hole yesterday, is eyeing a second title in three weeks. The Hampshire player, winner of the Girona Open, is involved in a five-way tie for the lead at the halfway stage of the Balearic Open in Mallorca.

Richardson feared he had fluffed a five-iron into a ditch at the 452-yard 6th, but the ball pulled up just short and from there he holed a 75-yard pitch for an eagle three.

"One moment I thought I was going to pay for being too adventurous — the next I've picked up two shots," the former English amateur champion said after a 69 that lifted him to a four-under-par total of 140.

Alongside him are Stephen Bennett, of Grimsby, after a best-of-the-day 67, Malcolm Mackenzie, of Sheffield (70), and Miguel Martin (71) and Jose Maria Olazabal, of Spain, the overnight leader, who recorded a 72.

Olazabal opened with a double bogey six after his appeal for relief from a scruffy lie behind a tree was turned down, but battled back and remained favourite for the £45,825 first prize.

Seve Ballesteros, the defending champion, was struggling to survive the cut throughout his second round. He did so on the limit only after a 15-foot birdie putt on the 17th and a par four on the tough closing hole, where he rolled a 45-foot putt to within six inches of the cup.

He gave Ballesteros a four-over-par aggregate of 148 and, regardless of how he fares this weekend, he has decided to try to play himself into form and will appear in next week's Catalan Open in Tarragona.

The three-time Open champion, without a win since this event 12 months ago and struggling with a neck strain, earlier had two double bogeys and a lucky break on the short 7th. His tee shot found a pond left of the green, but there was so little water there that it bounced out and he salvaged his three.

"Eight shots are possible to make up, but it depends how you feel and I don't have any confidence at the moment," he said. "I'm fighting a book with my driving and I didn't putt well today."

His company, Amen Corner, are the promoters this week, so his presence in all four rounds was a great relief to them. Ballesteros ran up a double-bogey seven on the mammoth 654-yard 10th, but that was not the worst score there. Jose Rivero had a 10.

Richardson, one of the big one-ironers on tour, needed a one-iron for his third shot at the same hole and said: "I've never had to do that at a par-five before after two decent hits." He dropped a stroke, but recovered it with a 30-foot putt on the 14th.

LEADING FINAL SCORES: 15th K. Hurley (69), 77, 78, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841, 842, 843, 844, 845, 846, 847, 848, 849, 850, 851, 852, 853, 854, 855, 856, 857, 858, 859, 860, 861, 862, 863, 864, 865, 866, 867, 868, 869, 870, 871, 872, 873, 874, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879, 880, 881, 882, 883, 884, 885, 886, 887, 888, 889, 890, 891, 892, 893, 894, 895, 896, 897, 898, 899, 900, 901, 902, 903, 904, 905, 906, 907, 908, 909, 910, 911, 912, 913, 914, 915, 916, 917, 918, 919, 920, 921, 922, 923, 924, 925, 926, 927, 928, 929, 930, 931, 932, 933, 934, 935, 936, 937, 938, 939, 940, 941, 942, 943, 944, 945, 946, 947, 948, 949, 950, 951, 952, 953, 954, 955, 956, 957, 958, 959, 960, 961, 962, 963, 964, 965, 966, 967, 968, 969, 970, 971, 972, 973, 974, 975, 976, 977, 978, 979, 980, 981, 982, 983, 984, 985, 986, 987, 988, 989, 990, 991, 992, 993, 994, 995, 996, 997, 998, 999, 1000.

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It was Hurley's first victory in more than six years as a professional and was achieved with the aid of her boyfriend, who caddied for her but wished to remain nameless because he should have been at work.

"He gave me an earbashing every time I missed a putt, and I missed quite a few," Hurley said. "The only one I holed was an eight footer for a birdie at the last."

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Lewis expands his empire

By ANDREW LONGMORE, TENNIS CORRESPONDENT

RICHARD Lewis might not like the word "supremo", but he effectively became one yesterday, when he was handed the unenviable task of reviving the fortunes of British men's tennis. Lewis is the first to be chosen in a restructuring of men's tennis after the dismissal of Warren Jacques three weeks ago and the fact that it is a familiar one comes as no real surprise.

The LTA has always operated on the principle of "better the devil you know" and so has resisted the temptation to advertise the job outside or to attract a big international name into the fold, at least at this stage, preferring to widen Lewis's year-old role as national director of training to include men's tennis.

The further expansion of his empire completes a remarkable rise to power for Lewis, aged 36, who first began to work for the LTA as head of national training for 18-and-under boys four years ago. Now only Ian Peacock, the chief executive, has greater powers.

On recent forms, the new job is akin to being the next accountant on the staff at the fairground stall, but Lewis feels that he has the breadth of experience to succeed where his predecessors have conspicuously failed and to answer the inevitable criticisms that his appointment is a soft and all-too-predictable option. "Anyone who says that is wrong," he said. "I am the right person for the job and I think my track record stands up well for the job at hand."

Lewis has seen the game from most angles. In 1982, he was a key member of the British team which reached the semi-final of the Davis Cup, he touched 60 in the world — roughly 100 places higher than the best British player in the rankings today — and as a coach helped Hana Mandlikova to win the US Open title in 1985.

He has also spent enough time in the nether reaches of the game to know how tough life is at the bottom and

enough time within the LTA to understand the strange workings of British tennis. He is realistic, not pessimistic, about the future.

"I don't think it's a question of having to start again, nor do I believe that it will take ten years to get it right," he said. "The problems at the moment are due to the stagnation of 20 years ago. A lot of good things are happening already and there are better players in the pipeline."

"We just have to focus all our efforts and our resources on producing young players who are capable of taking the step into the senior ranks. There are far too many players who are simply not good enough and we mustn't waste time on them. That might sound brutal, but it's right."

Lewis's first priority is to find a new Davis Cup captain in time for the tie against Poland in early May. In his appointment of Olga Morozova to work with the junior girls at Bisham Abbey, Lewis has shown that he is not frightened to attract the best and he might well try to use his considerable powers of persuasion to talk Tony Pickard into helping out.

He will also be responsible for appointing a national coach to dovetail with his own role, which will be more management and communication than coaching. "Bridging the gaps," as he terms it.

Though hardly a radical departure, Lewis's appointment at least means that British men's tennis will speak with one voice. Whether it is the right voice and whether the message will be any more acceptable than it has been over the last ten years, only time will tell.

Wimbledon are considering using an electronic net cord at this year's championships. The device was used successfully in several tournaments in England last year but has not been tried before in a grand slam event. Experiments will continue before a recommendation is put before the full committee.



Familiar face of British tennis: a realistic Lewis laughs the pessimists out of court

Agassi fails to rise to the occasion

ANDRE Agassi, the second seed, became the latest top player to be knocked out of the Champions Cup tournament in Indian Wells, California, when he was beaten by No. 16 seed, Jim Courier, yesterday. Agassi joined the six seeds who were beaten in the second round on Wednesday when he lost his third-round match, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Guy Forget, the third seed, beat Derrick Rostagno, 6-3, 6-1, while the No. 11 seed, Michael Stich, defeated Fabrice Santoro, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4. Serving at 5-4 for the match, Stich unleashed four aces.

Agassi, ranked fourth in the world, said: "He got the right points at the right time. On the crucial points against him, he'd come up with the big shot. On the crucial shots against me, I didn't rise to the occasion."

Mark Petchey won a personal battle to stage off two match points and reach the semi-finals of the Serve and Volley men's satellite indoor tournament at Telford yesterday. He beat Brian Jackson, of the United States, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 after being 4-6 down in the tie-break.

Petchey, angered by an earlier call, saved the first match point with a service and volley and the second with a backhand which Petchey hit into the net. Another fine service return took Petchey to match point and he ended the contest with a forehand volley

RUGBY LEAGUE

Wigan to outrun Northern threat

By KEITH MACKLIN

EITHER Bradford Northern are attempting to pull off a gigantic bluff, or the Silk Cut Challenge Cup quarter-final at Wigan tomorrow is a foretelling, with Wigan expected to engage first gear and coast home.

In their last two home games, Northern have succumbed to Sheffield Eagles and Oldham, with last Sunday's collapse against Oldham, who ran in more than 30 points, the low-water mark of the season.

Meanwhile Wigan have been moving menacingly up the championship table, and they dismissed Castleford in such a cavalier manner in the first round of the cup that there is already talk of a fourth successive Wembley win for the Central Park side.

Making matters worse for Bradford is the fact that Wigan will back to full strength with the return of their Great Britain utility back, Joe Lydon, after injury, giving them a choice of options in an already scintillating attack.

However, as history has proved time and time again, come bring out the best and worst in sides and Northern have beaten Wigan twice this season, once in a 31-30 thriller at Oldham and, more significant, in the Regal Trophy at Central Park.

In the latter game, the powerful Northern pack took charge with a display of sustained, fearsome tackling, which cut the ground from underneath Wigan's star runners. The Wigan coach, John Monie, is aware of this and said: "Perhaps we underestimated the power of the Northern forwards in that game. We will be ready for them this time and will attempt to move the ball wide to get away from a mid-field scrum battle which would suit Northern."

The quarter-finals begin tomorrow with a visit from Widnes, regarded as the only side likely to halt Wigan's march, to their bogey ground, Warrington.

Widnes, whose forward Kurt Sorenson, from New Zealand, is desperate to go to Wembley, will have to be in top form to counter Wigan's attack. Another fine service return took Petchey to match point and he ended the contest with a forehand volley

CRICKET

England A round off tour with an illuminating show

FROM RICHARD STREETON IN COLOMBO

ENGLAND A, who batted more positively than at any previous time, ended their tour with a decisive win against Sri Lanka A here last night in the fifth and last of a series of 30,000 crowd, almost as many as has watched the rest of the tour put together, revelled in the novel spectacle of the first day-night match played in this country. England A won by 51 runs.

England scored a daunting 246 for seven in their 45 overs after winning the toss and were far more purposeful than previously after losing the first four games of the five-match series. They fielded like demons under the floodlights and took several spectacular catches. Sri Lanka were left with an uphill struggle after Newport took three for 19 in his first five overs.

In succession, Newport had Kuruppu caught at slip, Wickramaratne at deep square leg and Fernando down the leg side off a glove. An expected half swing wildly in the evening humidity and all three England seamers were profligate early on with wides. Iltis, who at the last moment replaced Pick — who was unwell — bowled four in succession in his second over.

Newport's successes, though, stoned for these lapses before Rampakrishna and Illingworth subdued the batsmen with accurate spins of spin. Alapattu lost patience and was bowled as he charged Rampakrishna and Jurengathay skied a high catch to deep extra cover. With five wickets left, Sri Lanka needed 160 in 23 overs. Some spirited strokes from the left-handed Wickramaratne followed before the game rather petered out.

Morris, who won the man of the match award, was the dominant figure as England averaged more than five runs an over from the start of their innings. Halfway through it three wickets fell in the first three overs bowled by Jurengathay, the off spinner, before Thorpe and Hussain were able to restore the momentum. Rhodes, Newport and Illingworth all hit firmly in the closing overs and England scored a decisive 44 in the last five overs.

Fairbrother, who opened the innings, pushed a catch to backward point before Morris and Blakey shared a vigorous

stand worth 57 in 16 overs. Morris was fortunate on three occasions when he tried to sweep what to him were leg breaks from Kallage. Each time he got a top edge but the ball landed safely. Otherwise Morris drove and pulled with great assurance.

Blakey survived a return chance to Edirisinghe before he had scored but went on to drive freely on both sides of the wicket. When Jurengathay bowled, Blakey drove his first ball over mid-off for six but three balls later hit a low return catch. In Jurengathay's next over, Morris was adjudged run out by a direct hit from the covers by Wickramaratne though he seemed to have made his ground. England had fallen back a little and Rampakrishna was next to go, sweeping a low catch to square leg.

Thorpe, however, led the way as the rebuilding started until he was held on the deep midwicket boundary. Hussain, but across the line as the final slog began but the last three batsmen ensured Sri Lanka would face an arduous task.

ENGLAND A
 * N H Morris run out 54
 N H Fairbrother c Kallage 14
 R J Blakey c and d Jurengathay 30
 M H Rampakrishna c Wickramaratne 10
 S J Thorpe c and d Kallage 35
 S H Hussain c and d Kallage 17
 P J Newport not out 15
 R J Iltis 12
 Extras (p 3, b 9, w 10) 22
 Total (7 wickets, 45 overs) 246
 M C Iltis and T A Morris did not bat.
 FALL OF WICKETS: 1-35, 2-102, 3-122, 4-135, 5-190, 6-210, 7-222.
BOWLING: Edirisinghe 6-0-45-0; Hussain 6-0-45-0; Kallage 6-0-45-0; Alapattu 6-0-45-0; Jurengathay 6-0-45-0.

SRI LANKA A
 D S P Kuruppu c and d Newport 8
 D Wickramaratne c Thorpe 13
 N H Fairbrother c Rhodes 19
 M H Rampakrishna c Newport 14
 S J Thorpe c and d Kallage 35
 S H Hussain c and d Kallage 17
 P J Newport not out 15
 R J Iltis 12
 Extras (p 3, b 9, w 10) 22
 Total (7 wickets, 45 overs) 188
 FALL OF WICKETS: 1-35, 2-34, 3-28, 4-42, 5-102, 6-112, 7-122.
BOWLING: Newport 6-0-45-0; Thorpe 6-0-45-0; Kallage 6-0-45-0; Alapattu 6-0-45-0; Jurengathay 6-0-45-0.
 Umpires: K T Francis and U Wickramaratne.

SPORTS POLITICS

Africans give South Africa renewed hope

GABORONE (Reuters) — African sports officials expressed renewed optimism yesterday that a two-decade ban on sporting links with South Africa could be nearing an end.

"The recent political reforms in South Africa have had a lot of impact," the chairman of the Botswana National Olympic Committee, Ismail Bhebe, said after a meeting of African sports officials here.

Bhebe will host a meeting today between the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) and South African sports officials. The South Africans will brief ANOCA on progress since November in abolishing racial discrimination in sport.

The two sides met for preliminary talks in the Zimbabwean capital, Harare, last November, when South Africa was told to

EQUESTRIANISM

International show given timely pardon

THE 1991 Royal International Horse Show, which was under threat because of lack of sponsorship, will go ahead as planned at the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham, from June 13 to 16 (Jenny Mather writes).

Also Executive Associates, the new owners of British Equestrian Promotions, announced yesterday that it had secured financial underwriting for the show, which started in 1907. However, further sponsorship is being sought.

Sir Harry Llewellyn, the president of the show, said yesterday: "We are delighted with the news. The show is the oldest international horse show in Britain and the King George V Gold Cup and the Queen Elizabeth II Cup are two of the most respected international jumping competitions."

YACHTING

Smith wants special selection treatment

THE Royal Ocean Racing Club risks losing its leading One Ton Cup yacht and afterward crew to the Australians for this year's Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup (Perry Bickell writes).

The Ed Dubois-designed yacht, now under construction at Cowes for a Turkish owner, will be campaigned in the series by some of Britain's leading sailors including skipper Lawrence Smith, Jo Richards, Dubois and members of Smith's Rotmans team. In order to compete, however, the team requires £100,000 for sails and training expenses. The only way it can raise this from sponsorship, Smith asserts, is if the Admiral's Cup selectors nominate the yacht now for the team.

Otherwise, they must take up an offer from Peter Briggs, an Australian businessman, and campaign the boat for Australia. The ultimatum has not been

well received in British quarters. Ian Macdonald Smith, who heads the selection team, said yesterday: "The Royal Ocean Racing Club's board of directors yesterday for the part of its players in a fight during last month's Silk Cut Challenge Cup tie against Sheffield Eagles, who were fined £400.

Featherstone's team were fined £500 and Oldham A £500 for their clash on January 4. Half of each fine is payable now, with the remainder suspended for a year from the date of the game. David Howes, a spokesman for the Rugby League, said: "A brawl in which three or more players are involved and the punishment and suspended fines are to stop them doing it again."

Smith said: "There has been a lot of talk about chartering foreign One Tonners for the trials, but I have yet to see any of this confirmed. Our boat is a reality and I have a top crew."

Hick shows his class as he ends a jinx

SYDNEY (Reuters) — Graeme Hick may soon succeed where Ivor Richards and Ian Botham both failed, by ending the longest running jinx in Australian cricket.

Queensland have never won the Sheffield Shield in 89 years of trying, improving some of the biggest names in the game to no avail. This season, things are looking different. Hick has scored three centuries in the past three games, taking his total of first class hundreds to 57 and Queensland to the top of the Shield table alongside New South Wales.

Hick, who was born in Zimbabwe, is eligible to play for England from April and will play only one season in Australia. While the English touring side staggered to a 3-0 defeat in the Ashes test series, Hick was quietly learning how to adjust his technique to the extra bounce of Australian wickets.

Now, with the Australian season coming to its climax, Hick has proved his best and begun to perform at a level which shows comparisons with Sir Don Bradman are not so far-fetched.

Late last month, Hick's (12 not out in the second innings) helped Queensland beat Western Australia by seven wickets with one over to spare. The Zimbabwean-born batsman has followed that with 155 in the first innings against New South Wales in a match which could well decide who hosts the Shield final.

Jim Love and David Hughes scored MCC to victory in the 42nd over of their one day match against Namibia at Windhoek.

Completed results: NZ 154, South Africa 159, MCC 155-5 (Love 81 not out).

Dobson in debut

HELEN Dobson, the former British women's golf champion, from Lincolnshire, makes her debut as a professional in the Sunningdale four-course tournament on the Surrey course from March 19 to 22. Dobson and Vicki Thomas will receive six strokes.

The title will be defended by two other women, Dale Reid, of Scotland, and Corinne Dinham, of Australia. BOXING: Greg Haughey, the world light-welterweight champion, has failed a drugs test. Traces of marijuana were found after Haughey beat Hector Camacho in a WBO title bout.

Lindell Holmes retained his IBF super-middleweight title by beating Antoine Byrd on points in Madrid on Thursday.

OLYMPIC GAMES: The Chinese Olympic Committee has endorsed Peking bid for the 2000 Games.

RIFLE SHOOTING: David Chapman, of Baldock rifle club, has won a place at the 1992 Olympic Games by scoring 553 out of 600 in the European air rifle running target championship.

RACKETS: James Male needs just two games in his second-leg match against Shannon Hazell today to retain his Lacoste world title at Queen's Club.

TABLE TENNIS: Chen Xinhua will be trying to become champion for the first time while Desmond Douglas will be attempting to extend his record of titles to 11 in the English national men's singles championships in Sleaford from today.

ATHLETICS

World indoor championships: Men
 100m: 1. M. Taylor (USA), 10.49; 2. J. Brown (USA), 10.51; 3. J. Brown (USA), 10.52; 4. J. Brown (USA), 10.53; 5. J. Brown (USA), 10.54; 6. J. Brown (USA), 10.55; 7. J. Brown (USA), 10.56; 8. J. Brown (USA), 10.57; 9. J. Brown (USA), 10.58; 10. J. Brown (USA), 10.59; 11. J. Brown (USA), 10.60; 12. J. Brown (USA), 10.61; 13. J. Brown (USA), 10.62; 14. J. Brown (USA), 10.63; 15. J. Brown (USA), 10.64; 16. J. Brown (USA), 10.65; 17. J. Brown (USA), 10.66; 18. J. Brown (USA), 10.67; 19. J. Brown (USA), 10.68; 20. J. Brown (USA), 10.69; 21. J. Brown (USA), 10.70; 22. J. Brown (USA), 10.71; 23. J. Brown (USA), 10.72; 24. J. Brown (USA), 10.73; 25. J. Brown (USA), 10.74; 26. J. Brown (USA), 10.75; 27. J. Brown (USA), 10.76; 28. J. Brown (USA), 10.77; 29. J. Brown (USA), 10.78; 30. J. Brown (USA), 10.79; 31. J. Brown (USA), 10.80; 32. J. Brown (USA), 10.81; 33. J. Brown (USA), 10.82; 34. J. Brown (USA), 10.83; 35. J. Brown (USA), 10.84; 36. J. Brown (USA), 10.85; 37. J. 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SPORT

SUMMARY

Ready for the off



THE Formula One motor racing season opens tomorrow in Phoenix and while car designs, driver combinations and regulations may have changed, some things remain the same. The leading protagonists from last year, Ayrton Senna, above, and Alain Prost, are in disagreement. On the eve of the United States grand prix, the two expressed opposing views on the change in the points-scoring system which awards ten for a win, one more than last season, and all points to count. Senna, the world champion, is in favour of the best 11 results to count whereas Prost's consistent driving style is best suited by the new system. Norman Howell reports from the Arizona street circuit. Page 35

RUGBY UNION

Clubs first

THE Courage Clubs champions meet the first division leaders today for a match which could decide the destination of this season's title. David Hands suggests that the international of Wasp and Bath might be casting covetous eyes towards Harlequins, who have no fixture before tomorrow's England training. Page 36

GOLF

To the fore



MAKING her bow as a professional at the Sunningdale foursomes later this month is Helen Dobson, above, the former British women's champion. The Lincolnshire player, who played in the Curtis Cup against the United States last year, has recovered from an elbow injury to enter the tournament from March 19 to 22. Reports from the Open de Bascles and Rochampton Gold Cup. Page 38

CRICKET

Final flourish

A CROWD of 30,000 in Colombo witnessed the first day-night match in Sri Lanka and saw England A end their tour on a positive note with a decisive win in the fifth one-day international. Page 39

TENNIS

Court change



RICHARD Lewis, above, has been entrusted with reviving the fortunes of British men's tennis. Andrew Longmore looks at the man who has enjoyed a remarkable four-year rise in the Lawn Tennis Association from head of boys' national training to a task which many would consider unenviable. Page 39

RACING

Stable talk

DAVID Elsworth may be apprehensive about the chances of Desert Orchid capturing the Tote Gold Cup for the second time at Cheltenham next week but others at his Hampshire stables are more bullish. Michael Seely reports. Page 36

D

Christie pipped by Cason

From DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT, SEVILLE

LINFORD Christie and Ben Johnson were both beaten to the world indoor 60 metres title yesterday in the first race between them since Johnson's Olympic disgrace in 1988. Andre Cason, aged 22, and second to Christie in an international match in Glasgow last weekend, was the unexpected winner.

While Christie and Johnson were locked in the greatest scandal in Olympic history three years ago, Cason was just becoming world junior 100 metres champion. Yesterday, he came of age by taking his first world title and denying Christie his.

Watched by Juan Antonio Samaranch, the International Olympic Committee president, for the first time since he failed a drugs test and was disqualified from his gold medal in Seoul, Johnson received the warmest welcome of all eight finalists from spectators in the San Pablo Stadium.

He gave them a false start at the first attempt and was nothing like the Johnson we used to know when he fired from the blocks. But it was good enough to beat Christie away and Britain's European champion had to run him down.

But he could not do that to Cason in the way he had in Glasgow, where he passed him with three metres to run. Cason had shown he was to be reckoned with in the heats and semi-finals in which he was the fastest, recording 6.52sec and 6.55. His gold medal-winning time was 6.54, with Christie on 6.55 and Chidi Imoh, of Nigeria, third in 6.60. Johnson had to settle for equal fourth with the Cuban, Andres Simon, on 6.61.

There was an upset, too, in the women's 60 metres, which produced the first defeat in two years and more than 70 races for Merlene Ottey, of Jamaica. Poor Katrina Krabbe, too. After her glorious European championships, in which she scored a sprint double, she was sixth here. Irina Sergejeva, of the Soviet Union, beat both of them to take the title in 7.02sec, only

0.02sec outside the world record.

At 22, the same as Cason, Sergejeva has come to the surface suddenly after finishing sixth in the European 100 metres final last summer. And to think that only three years ago she was a long jumper first and sprinter second.

Britain brought a squad of 21, one third of whom were required to perform in the first session of the championships yesterday morning. Iken Billy failed to progress in the 800 metres, which gave him the ignominious distinction of being the only Briton to be knocked out before the opening ceremony; the ceremony preceded the afternoon session.

Martin Steele is trying to do a Matthew Yates and take an 800 metres medal in his first international championship. Yates won a Commonwealth bronze last year and, with Paul Ereng and William Tanui here, third is probably the best Steele can hope for.

He looked new to this level in his heat, becoming detached from the field on the second of four laps; then, on the third, he moved up to second, only to let the Argentine, Luis Migueles, inside him.

However, Steele had said that his outstanding quality was his finishing strength and here was the evidence. He had the best last 50 metres of anyone in his heat and, in the end, looked a comfortable qualifier.

With Imin 48.28sec, behind the best winner, Joachim Dehmel, of Germany, Steele took one of the two automatic places in today's semi-finals.

Debbie Marti, who equalled the British high jump record of 1.94 metres last month, qualified for today's final, though she needed three attempts at 1.87 metres to do so. Marti is making up for lost time. Seven years ago, she was over looked for the Los Angeles Olympic Games on the grounds of her age, 16; then she went down with Myocardial Encephalomyelitis (ME) and only now, at 22, is she developing her potential.

Results, page 39



Silver in sight: Linford Christie on the way to his second-place medal in Seville

Welsh pool resources

By GERALD DAVIES

LEADING Welsh players could earn, collectively, a six-figure sum, according to the commercial agents appointed yesterday by the Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) to act in the interests of the national squad. The union announced the appointment of First Artist Corporation as its sole agent.

"We have acted within the letter and spirit of the IRFB's regulations," Jonathan Price, the WRU commercial executive, said. "Monies earned by our agents on behalf of the players will be paid into a trust fund set up by our union."

The formula for the distribution of the money is similar to that promoted in Scotland, which is based on a points system according to appearances, not only in the international jersey but also on the time spent in the squad. The Welsh squad will be marketed as an entity that will benefit the whole squad and not just those players with a high profile.

Players can opt out if they wish and pursue their own inclinations, provided they do not conflict with the interests of the whole, but they will be asked to enter into a contractual agreement with the WRU, which will include guidelines on media activity and behaviour at official functions. Players will be sent on media training courses to learn how to perform, for instance, on television.

"All is not wrong with Welsh rugby," John Smith, director of First Artist, said. "There were 10,000 spectators at the Pontypridd and Llanelli match on Tuesday evening."

Smith's company is also agent to the England football and cricket teams. In New Zealand a new company, All Black Promotions Limited, has been established to market players, individually and as a team. The directors include two representatives of the New Zealand Rugby Union, two players and two businessmen with rugby interests. It will have a full-time manager and all members of the team will be shareholders for an initial period of 12 months.

S Africa to seek official status

From RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH AFRICA is to demand official status at the International Cricket Council (ICC) meeting at Lord's in July to put its case for an immediate end to its isolation from the Test arena. Dr Ali Bacher, managing director of the South African Cricket Union (SACU), said in Johannesburg yesterday that letters will be sent to the ICC before the end of this month to request the hearing.

Bacher said that a new governing body of cricket in South Africa, formed by a merger between the predominantly white SACU and the non-white South African Cricket Board, would be

formed "by the end of June at the latest". Bacher was responding to comments in *The Times* by Clyde Walcott, president of the West Indies Board of Control, who said he would have no objection to a merged South African authority addressing the ICC informally.

It marked a distinct shift in attitude to the South African issue by West Indies. Six years ago, together with England, West Indies were responsible for the introduction of automatic Test suspension for any player visiting South Africa to play or coach.

England A report, page 39

Soviet ballerina meets locks from hell

SIMON BARNES
ON SATURDAY

This, being as ever the column on the cutting edge of sport, brings you more spectacular and utterly exclusive news from the event of the year. This is, of course, the women's rugby World Cup, which has finally closed its entry with 12 nations agreeing to take part. The French confirmed their participation at the last possible second, later even than the Soviet Union. There are eight Soviet women's rugby clubs; I hear that their hooker is a former ballet dancer.

I wonder how she will face up to pressure from "the locks from hell". These are Tara Flanagan and Tam Breckenridge, of the United States. Both play for Belmont Shore club in California and both played basketball for UCLA. Both are more than six foot tall, and both are enthusiastic body-builders. Oh, and they work out at the same gym as Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Record stand

Here is the most shocking news you will read this week - the new stand at Lord's is finished. Really and truly, and only ten months late. There were problems with "finding the right mix of concrete". I am told, and the high winds made things worse. The question that remains is, who will pay for losses incurred by the delay?

The MCC secretary, Lt-Col John Stephenson, said: "No one knows how much the additional work will cost. I am not sure if the MCC is

insured for it." The extent of the responsibility of contractor and subcontractor is also unclear: there is talk of legal action. One certainty is that the club can look forward to yet another stormy AGM in May.

The Test and County Cricket Board, meanwhile, is still upset about losing revenue from the traditional Lord's big days, because the problems with the stand reduced ground capacity from 27,000 to 18,000, and expect to recoup from the MCC "in time". The Compton and Edrich stand will be officially named in a ceremony on May 27.

The Cheltenham festival looms towards us like a runaway lorry next week, so it was hardly surprising to find my racing snout on the telephone. "Don't look past the grey horse in the Gold Cup," he said. "Though if you fancy a sporting each-way bet, try Fairy Politics." He recommends *Non-magic Way for the Champion Hurdle*, and *Local Whisper for the Sun Alliance Chase* on Wednesday. "Bet of the meeting, that one."

A likely story

There is magic in the air in northwest Surrey. Last summer, six events at the district athletics championship - the 100, 200, 800 and 1,500 metres, and the long jump

and high jump - all fell to Helen, Elizabeth and Susie Williams, of Heathside School, Weybridge - a set of identical triplets. They followed this dizzy triumph by taking first, second and third in the recent district cross-country championships.

Meanwhile, Spelthorne College, Ashford, have, for the first time, reached the final of the national basketball championship. They play Sandon, Essex, in the first leg of the final next Thursday. Spelthorne's attack is spearheaded by Nathalie and Sarah Gibson, a pair of identical twins. And when a tactical substitution is required, off go Nathalie and Sarah, and on come Berenice and Jocelyn King - yet another pair of identical twins.

As the financial woes of English racing grow ever more acute, in the United States, *Pai Day* has become the stakelocker in history whose mounts have won more than \$100 million. He passed this astronomical figure when riding *Wild Sierra* into second place last week. The other five jockeys are Bill Shoemaker, Laffit Pincay Jr, Angel Cordero Jr, Jorge Velazquez and Chris McCarron.

Sumo shock

Sumo wrestling has been rocked by scandal. The once-revered Kotomishiki, seen everywhere as a grand champion in the making, is now the subject of such headlines as "Incurable Moron". The scandal is, naturally, all about sex: Kotomishiki has abandoned his pregnant wife, whom he married secretly, for a 19-

year-old student, whom he has promised to marry. This sort of stuff may be expected in English football, but sumo is seen as a repository of national virtues as well as sport. Some observers put it all down to the passing of the age of the geisha, who were the traditional companions of sumo wrestlers. One insider told *Bunshun* magazine: "Things like this happen because the number of geisha houses has dropped dramatically. The boys have nowhere to play any more, and have to resort to tangling with ordinary, innocent girls."

Worldly wise

Mike Reid retired as a defensive end for the Cincinnati Bengals in 1975, saying he was "disenchanted with the system and pro football in general". He has just made No. 1 in America's country music charts with his first album. Asked to comment on the remarks he made on leaving pro football, he told *Sports Illustrated* magazine: "Athletes in their twenties haven't had their Copernican revolution yet. They still think the world revolves around them."

Cold logic

Congratulations to Joona Paranen, aged 18, and winner of one million Finnish marks (about £140,000) for beating 5,000 other contestants to win a nine-day ice-fishing contest in Kerimäki, in eastern Finland. What's your secret, Joona? "You just drill the hole, put the bait on and drop the line."

Venables has no inkling of latest rumour

By CLIVE WHITE

TERRY Venables, the Tottenham Hotspur manager, denied any knowledge yesterday, on the eve of the most important game in the club's season, of a reported £7 million bid for Paul Gascoigne from Lazio in Italy.

An agreement for the sale of Tottenham's outstanding player was reported in *Gazzetta dello Sport* to have been reached between Mel Stein and Len Lazzarus, the agents for Gascoigne, and Gianmarco Calleri, the Lazio president. But Venables said: "If he is going to Lazio then I don't know anything about it."

Venables has said all along that he would not necessarily be consulted on the sale of Gascoigne, which he said was out of his hands. If the reports that the deal is awaiting only the consent of the player are true, then Tottenham would be on the verge of saving the club financially, if nothing else, even though its debts amount to £20 million.

Nat Solomon, the chairman of Tottenham plc, reiterated at the recent annual meeting of the company that he could not rule out the sale of any player if it would help ease Tottenham's financial crisis.

It was hardly the kind of news that Venables needed to hear on the eve of the club's FA Cup quarter-final against Notts County tomorrow. But he is beginning to steel himself against such stories. He was more concerned yesterday about the effect it might be having upon his most valuable player.

"He is a naturally bubbly character, but that doesn't mean he is not upset by it. The important thing is how you deal with it. If you run away from it then you have no chance, but he faces up to it and handles it very well."

"These stories are becoming a way of life. Every day, there seems to be a new club and a new country or a new something or other. I suppose it will continue until it's all cleared up."

The more immediate problem for Venables is the fitness of Gascoigne, who will need a double hernia operation at the end of the season. He rated the midfielder player, whose performance in the two previous rounds of the cup have been brilliant, as having only a 50-50 chance of playing in tomorrow's game. Tottenham have nursed him through the past few weeks, resting him in matches which they considered less important. Tottenham's future could depend upon his presence.

"Every time he plays, he aggravates it further and the recovery time is definitely getting longer. He only does light training through the week, but a lot of players get away with that throughout the season. They're fit enough, anyway, by now."

"He's had treatment all week and we have just got to wait and see. He's a bit better today than yesterday and with another 48 hours' rest then, hopefully, he will be all right."

Gary Lineker, Paul Walsh and Gary Mabbutt, the captain, are also having treatment, for ankle injuries, but all are expected to be fit.

Forest will miss Hodge again

BRIAN Clough, the Nottingham Forest manager, will today attempt to move one step nearer winning the FA Cup, the one big trophy that has eluded him during his 25 years as a manager. (Clive White writes.)

Not that victory over Norwich City, whom they meet at Carrow Road, is likely to raise optimism particularly. Forest have reached the semi-final round in two of the last three seasons.

Forest will again be without Steve Hodge, their influential midfielder, though his absence did not appear to hamper them when they beat Southampton 3-1 in a replay.

Should Forest make it to Wembley, it could be by the most roundabout route on record. It has taken them seven matches and four postponements so far to progress through just three rounds. There is every indication that today's tie could go to a replay, too.

Norwich will be anxious to make amends for the 6-2

deficit they suffered on their own ground at the hands of Forest in January. Ian Crook, who has missed the last two games with a hamstring injury, should return for Norwich, but there is unlikely to be a place for Ian Butterworth, the former Forest player, who is fit again after missing five games.

Perry Groves, Andy Linaghan and Kevin Campbell are all fit after injury and have been included in the Arsenal squad for today's only other quarter-final tie against Cambridge United at Highbury. Anders Limpar has already been ruled out by an ankle injury.

Michel der Zakarian, the Montpellier defender who was injured during the European Cup Winners Cup quarter-final against Manchester United at Old Trafford on Wednesday night, underwent an operation on damaged knee ligaments on Friday.

Der Zakarian is expected to be out of action for three to six weeks, ruling him out of the return leg with United in France.

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